#### THE

### DOMESTIC POLITICS

OF

# GERMAN

edited by

Christopher Anderson Karl Kaltenthaler Wolfgang Luthardt

## The Domestic Politics of German Unification

edited by

Christopher Anderson Karl Kaltenthaler Wolfgang Luthardt Published in the United States of America in 1993 by Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. 1800 30th Street, Boulder, Colorado 80301

and in the United Kingdom by
Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
3 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 8LU

© 1993 by Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved

The Domestic politics of German line and Control Christopher Anderson, Karl Kaltenthaler, and V. 22 Luth, de Luth de

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 1-55587-409-6 (alk. paper)

1. Germany—Politics and government—1945–1990. 2. Political parties—Germany—History—20th century. 3. Germany—History—Unification, 1990. I. Anderson, Christopher, 1966—

II. Kaltenthaler, Karl, 1966— . III. Luthardt, Wolfgang. JN3971.A58D58 1993

943.087'9—dc20

93-10015 CIP

British Cataloguing in Publication Data A Cataloguing in Publication record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound in the United States of America

The paper used in this publication meets the requirements of the American National Standard for Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials Z39.48-1984.

#### Acknowledgments

We gratefully acknowledge the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for providing very generous financial support for the completion of this book. Working with such backing made our lives as editors a lot easier. We would also like to thank the Political Science Department at Washington University in St. Louis, which provided us with a home while we worked on this project. We appreciate in particular the support of the department's chairs, John Sprague and Robert Salisbury, as well as the clerical help provided by Janet Rensing—faxing was more fun when done with Janet's help.

Chris Anderson acknowledges the support of John Sprague and Karl Kaltenthaler, and of Russell Dalton of the University of California, Irvine, who graciously supplied helpful hints on publishing an edited volume on German politics. Thanks also to Kylie Jill Hansen, a special friend in the English Department at Washington University, for straightening out questions of prose and everyday life.

Karl Kaltenthaler acknowledges the support provided by a Fulbright Research Grant to the German Democratic Republic in 1989–1990, which facilitated his research on East German politics, and also furnished a unique opportunity to witness history in the making. Gerd Horsch, Günther Streibel, and Manfred Melzer were particularly helpful in explaining the politics of East Germany. Last, but by no means least, Karl Kaltenthaler thanks his wife, Florence Kot, for encouragement and support.

Wolfgang Luthardt thanks the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), in particular Wedigo de Vivanco and Heidrun Suhr in New York and Marianne Reichling and Gottfried Gögold in Bonn. Moreover, he thanks the director of the European Studies Program at Washington University, Paul Michael Lützeler; the Department of Political Science, especially Robert Salisbury, John Sprague, John Kautsky, Arnold Heidenheimer, and Victor LeVine; his coeditors; and Wilhelm Neuefeind of the Department of Economics. These institutions and colleagues made

his time as a visiting associate professor at Washington University in 1990–1992 a pleasant and intellectually rewarding experience.

Finally, the editors would like to thank Martha Peacock of Lynne Rienner Publishers for her competent, quick, clever, and ever-friendly and cheerful help in turning this project into a finished book.

There is a museum in Berlin, next to where Checkpoint Charlie used to be. It documents the ingenuity and courage of people trying to flee the German Democratic Republic after the Wall was built in 1961. They swam rivers, built balloons to fly to the West, hid in secret compartments in automobiles, and used trucks to crash crossing-points. Many of them were imprisoned when their plans were discovered, and a number of them lost their lives.

The museum is a testament also to the human desire to live in freedom from an authoritarian regime. Not everyone tried to flee. In fact, most East German citizens decided to stay behind the Iron Curtain, and many sought to reform the Communist system from within—into a system in which democracy was real and not just a slogan. They formed discussion groups, they met secretly in churches, and they believed in the possibility of real reform. These individuals played a large part in the peaceful surrender of the old Communist regime.

This book is dedicated to the spirit of freedom embodied both by those trying to flee and by those who believed in the possibility of a peaceful transformation of the East German system.

Christopher Anderson Karl Kaltenthaler Wolfgang Luthardt

#### Contents

	List of Tables and Figures	vii
	Acknowledgments	ix
	Introduction Christopher Anderson, Karl Kaltenthaler, and Wolfgang Luthardt	1
Part	1 The Process and Politics of Unification	·
1	The Process of Regime Change in East Germany  Gerhard Lehmbruch	17
2	Electoral Politics in the New Germany: Public Opinion	
	and the Bundestag Election of December 2, 1990	27
3	Max Kaase Years of Transition:	37
3	Financing East German Parties in 1989/90  Peter Lösche	61
4	Political Elites and Electoral Rules:	
	The Composition of the Bundestag, 1949–1990	
	Christopher Anderson	73
5	The Rise of Right-Wing Extremism in the New Germany	
	Gerard Braunthal	97

#### Part 2 Political Institutions and Policy Choices: New Challenges

6	Necessary Illusions: The Transformation	
	of Governance Structures in the New Germany	
	Wolfgang Seibel	117
7	The Basic Law Under Strain:	
	Constitutional Dilemmas and Challenges	
	Donald P. Kommers	135
8	The Future of Federalism in the Unified Germany	
	Arthur B. Gunlicks	155
9	The Reconstruction of Organized Labor and	
	Employer Associations in the Former GDR	
	M. Donald Hancock	175
10	Coping with the Legacy of East German	
	Environmental Policy	
	Karl Kaltenthaler	187
11	The Transformation of the East German Education System	
	Lutz Reuter	205
12	The Domestic Politics of the	
	Post-Unification Era: Politics, History, and Economy	
	Karl Kaltenthaler and Christopher Anderson	225
	About the Contributors	243
	Index	245
	About the Book	254

#### Tables and Figures

Table	es	
2.1	Short-term and long-term consequences of unification as	
	viewed by the West German voting-age citizenry, 1990	45
2.2	Issue priorities in the West German population and in the	
	West German media before the general election of 1990	50
2.3	Issue priorities in the East German population and in the	
	East German media before the general election of 1990	52
2.4	Results of the 1990 general election	54
3.1	State subsidies for bloc parties	63
3.2	State subsidies to East German parties, 1990	66
10.1	Sulfur dioxide and dust emissions in the GDR	197
10.2	Percentage of forest damaged in the GDR	197
Figur	res	
2.1	The political mood of the West German voting-age citizenry, 1987–1990	39
2.2	Most important problems in the "old" Federal Republic of	
	Germany	40
2.3	West German voting-age citizenry in favor of unification	43
4.1	Average age of Bundestag members, 1949–1990	79
4.2	Bundestag members with college education, 1949–1990	81
4.3	Proportion of women in the Bundestag, 1949–1990	84
4.4	Proportion of Wahlkreise won by the CDU/CSU, 1949–1990	87
4.5	Safe seats among Wahlkreis seats won by CDU/CSU	
	and SPD, 1949–1990	88
4.6	Proportion of Wahlkreise won by women, 1949–1990	90

#### Introduction

### Christopher Anderson Karl Kaltenthaler Wolfgang Luthardt

The unification of the two German states is easily one of the most significant events of the twentieth century, not only in German national history but also for world politics. Moreover, the unification process of East and West Germany has been at the heart of the recent wave of democratization that has swept Central and Eastern Europe. And although the formal incorporation of the old German Democratic Republic (East Germany) into the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) may seem to some to have accomplished the major task of German unification, in reality it was only the beginning of a new and difficult era of German politics: the German political system is now charged with rebuilding a democratic system and a viable economy in the eastern part of the country.

#### The Context of German Unification

When one considers the forty-five years between the partition of Germany in 1945 as a consequence of the Allied occupation of the country and its unification in 1990, it is difficult to overlook just how differently the two German states evolved. Both the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) were founded as separate political entities in 1949. But despite that common starting point, they developed along divergent lines politically, economically, and socially.

The West German political system was based on the principles of liberal democracy. These principles provided the foundation of the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*), West Germany's provisional constitution, which was originally meant to be in force only until eventual reunification with the eastern part of the country. The Federal Republic's political institutions resembled those of the Weimar Republic, but there were a number of important differences. Take, for example, the electoral system, an institutional feature that some scholars early on identified as one of the culprits for the demise of the

Weimar Republic:<sup>2</sup> Instead of pure proportional representation, a 5 percent hurdle was established in elections to the federal legislature and the Länder parliaments in order to guard against the fragmentation of political power that had plagued the Weimar Republic. And, as the name belies, the Federal Republic of Germany was designed as a federal state in which the individual states (Länder) maintained substantially more power than had been the case during the Weimar Republic. Important policy areas like education were turned over to the Länder, which were only required to follow broad guidelines from the federal government. The federal nature of West Germany was the result of a conscious effort to create a more decentralized German state that would incorporate checks and balances.

But the Federal Republic of Germany also presented a distinct break with Germany's past because both the West Germans and the Allies worked to instill democratic values in the West German populace. The attempt to de-Nazify and democratize the German polity profoundly shaped the nature of West German politics; to this day German political elites seem ever so anxious about the fragility of German democracy. This sensitivity to the extremes of the political right and left, partially a result of the Weimar period and partially conditioned by the Cold War, led West German political elites to develop institutional rules that substantially and effectively reduced the potential for a rise of extreme antidemocratic parties on both sides of the political spectrum. Despite what the bans on parties on the extreme left and right may indicate, democracy never faced a serious challenge during the course of the FRG's existence. Over the years, a remarkable record of solid democratic politics and stable political institutions imbued West Germans with faith in their "Bonn Democracy" and, as the opportunity arose, with the confidence that the political institutions of the Federal Republic would be suitable for a united Germany.

While the FRG maintained political stability similar to that of its liberal democratic neighbors in Western Europe, the GDR followed the pattern of its Soviet-bloc allies. The creation of the German "workers' and peasants' state" was a much more dramatic break with Germany's past than the creation of the FRG. East German political institutions were shaped by the Soviet model and were based on the Leninist principle of democratic centralism.

The East German state, although originally federally organized (it was centralized in 1952) and nominally a multiparty democracy, developed a much more centralized and controlled political system than its western counterpart. The authoritarian nature of the East German state, above all, differentiated it from the Federal Republic. No free elections were held from the founding of the GDR in October 1949 until March 1990 (they were originally scheduled for May but were moved up), just seven months before the unification of the two German states. The Socialist Unity Party (SED), which was formed as a result of the forced merger of the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party in 1946, was the central source of political power in the GDR. Yet the National Front, a vehicle used by the SED to include as many social and political groups as possible in a controlled political process, also included Christian Democratic, Liberal, National Democratic, and farmers' parties. The National Front, the Marxist-Leninist Free Confederation of German Trade Unions (FDGB), and the Freie Deutsche Jungend (FDJ-the youth organization of the SED), were all designed to add some semblance of political participation and pluralism and thus legitimacy to the GDR. Establishing legitimacy was particularly important in a state where many of its own citizens voted with their feet and risked fleeing to West Germany despite an intricate system of obstacles to leaving the country. The inability of East German political elites to convince their citizens that the GDR was a legitimate and viable counterpart to the Federal Republic only accelerated the rapid collapse of the GDR and the subsequent unification of the two German states. When Mikhail Gorbachev withdrew the Soviet blessing from the SED regime in October 1989, the SED lost its last hope of remaining legitimate in the eyes of the East German population.

The glaring discrepancies in living standards between the two Germanies were perhaps the most crucial factor undermining the legitimacy of the GDR. East Germans constantly saw just how well off their neighbors "over there" were because of their access to West German television. Although East Germany enjoyed a better standard of living than any other socialist country in the world, the SED regime was never able to quell the people's desire to achieve a life like that broadcast nightly by West German television.

Despite the GDR's inability to match the economic development of the FRG, East Germany did make some startling economic achievements, given its rather daunting handicaps. It must be remembered that the Soviet occupation zone of Germany had been more badly damaged by Allied bombing than the western portions of the country. Moreover, the Soviets had stripped the eastern part of Germany of up to 30 percent of its industrial plants and equipment and shipped them back to the Soviet Union in lieu of reparations. The GDR was also handicapped by the westward flight of many of Germany's top scientists and technicians from the advancing Red Army. Perhaps the most serious obstacle facing the economic development of the GDR was its inclusion in the Soviet economic orbit. This not only precluded the GDR from receiving Marshall Plan aid but also meant that the GDR's trading partners were the underdeveloped economies of Eastern and Central Europe. A lack of natural resources also forced the GDR to rely on fuel supplies from its often unreliable eastern neighbors.

Despite these economic handicaps, the GDR maintained impressive rates of economic growth and developed the most technologically advanced economy in Eastern and Central Europe. This relatively impressive economic record was achieved while the GDR adhered to the Soviet-Stalinist economic model. East Germany never experimented with "goulash communism," as did the Hungarians, or turned to the West as did the Romanians and Yugoslavs. The German Democratic Republic, as Erich Honecker, leader of the SED from 1971 to 1989, would sometimes arrogantly claim, was an economic success within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) because of the East Germans' discipline and hard work.

But if the East Germans had reason to be proud, their western neighbors in the Federal Republic had perhaps even more reason to be self-congratulatory. West Germany rose from a bombed-out shell of the western portion of the German Reich into the world's third-largest economy. The West German economic miracle was a product of hard work, careful postwar planning, and the fortune of being part of a vibrant Atlantic economy. The West German economic model, referred to as the social market economy because of its combination of the principles of laissez-faire capitalism with those of the welfare state, became the envy not only of other European states but also of developing countries outside Europe. The size and might of the West German economy turned the FRG into a model for others to emulate; they also gave West Germany the power to influence economic and political relations between European states and allowed it to play a more significant role in shaping the events in the wider world economy.

It was the Federal Republic's firm roots in Western Europe, more specifically in the European Community (EC), that provided the basis of its economic miracle. West Germany's ties to the advanced industrialized states of the Atlantic economy provided markets and resources for its export-oriented economic growth. West Germany's firm commitment to the EC helped placate those who feared the reemergence of a strong and confident Germany. But it was West Germany's membership in the NATO alliance that did the most to convince edgy Europeans that a strong Germany was an asset and not a threat to European security. The Federal Republic's commitments to its European and Atlantic allies lifted it out of political isolation and made it a respected member of the world community.

While the Federal Republic of Germany benefited from its membership in the EC and NATO, the German Democratic Republic had to bear the weight of being entangled in the economic and military alliances of the Soviet bloc. The GDR's membership in COMECON and the Warsaw Pact cut it off from the nurturing ties of the West and made it the front line of the Cold War. The GDR also bore the brunt of a diplomatic campaign on the part of West Germany, based on the Hallstein Doctrine, which announced that any state that recognized the GDR would automatically lose the diplomatic recognition of West Germany. This policy was the product of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's foreign policy during the 1950s and 1960s of moving the Federal Republic firmly into the Western camp while

trying to isolate the GDR and demonstrate the FRG's resolve to stand up to the Soviet Union. When the Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union—Social Democratic Party(CDU/CSU-SPD) grand coalition collapsed in 1969 and was replaced by the Social Democratic Party-Free Democratic Party (SPD-FDP) coalition, the West German policy of trying to isolate the GDR gave way to Willy Brandt's policy of Ostpolitik. (Ostpolitik was the policy of opening to the East to relieve tensions between West Germany and its eastern neighbors, particularly the GDR and Poland.)

This opening to the GDR led to the Grundlagenvertrag, or basic treaty, of 1972, which provided de facto recognition of the GDR as a separate state but never offered the GDR de jure recognition. It served as the basis for inter-German relations from 1972 until unification, a period in which East-West relations in general moved from détente to renewed tensions and finally to the demise of the Cold War. But despite the ups and downs in superpower relations, inter-German relations remained relatively consistent throughout the 1970s and 1980s, even gaining ground during the very tense early 1980s. Meanwhile, the SED leadership was wary of its lack of legitimacy among its own population and feared that a substantial rapprochement with the Federal Republic would threaten the SED's ability to control the East German population. Due to the economic slowdown and subsequent austerity measures introduced by the East German government in 1982, East Germans became increasingly aware during the course of the 1980s that the SED regime denied them the quality of life that their West German neighbors took for granted.

However, instead of following the direction of the Soviet Union and its policies of glasnost and perestroika in order to bolster the East German economy and gain popularity, the SED leadership chose to remain recalcitrant and rejected Soviet-style reform. Erich Honecker's regime adopted a pose of defiance in the face of Soviet liberalization, even going so far as to ban Soviet periodicals it found too politically provocative. When asked by Western journalists in 1987 why the GDR had not embarked on the path of reform mapped out by the Soviet Union, Kurt Hager, an SED politburo member, countered with "Why do we need to change our wallpaper every time our neighbor does?" Such statements only heightened the tension between Soviet and East German leaders.

Reform in the Soviet Union was not the only cause for tension between the SED and the Soviet leadership. In the spring of 1989, Mikhail Gorbachev announced the end of the Brezhnev doctrine and endorsed the profound reforms that were under way in Hungary and Poland, including the Hungarian leadership's decision to dismantle the border between Hungary and Austria on May 2, 1989. When this became known in East Germany, thousands of East Germans traveled to Hungary with the intention of escaping to the Federal Republic via Austria. This sieve in the East German state's borders worsened as more and more East Germans began to

fear that reform was not forthcoming from the SED and that the best option was to leave immediately or face a bleak future in the GDR.

In addition to the problem of the mass flight of GDR citizens to the West, Erich Honecker was also faced with rising discontent at home. During September 1989 East Germans took to the streets to demand reforms and freedom of travel. As these demonstrations increased in size and intensity, the GDR celebrated its fortieth anniversary, on October 7, 1989. Mikhail Gorbachev, who was to give a speech commemorating the founding of the GDR, used the celebration ceremony as an opportunity to warn Honecker that resisting reform would lead to his being overtaken by history. The speech set off a series of large-scale demonstrations in Berlin and Leipzig that continued throughout October 1989. Honecker remained obdurate and used the GDR's security police to quell the demonstrations. Realizing that Honecker's position on reform threatened to ignite violence, the SED politburo removed Honecker from office on October 18, 1989. Honecker's successor, Egon Krenz, grappled with ways to stem the swelling protests and continuing flow of East Germans to the West. When promises of reforms did not placate GDR citizens, Krenz took the radical step of opening the East German border for travel to the West.

When Günther Schabowski, member of the East German politburo and speaker for the government, announced at a press conference in East Berlin on the evening of November 9, 1989, that all East German citizens could travel without restriction to West Germany and West Berlin, he probably did not anticipate that this move would only accelerate the collapse of the SED regime and lead to the eventual unification of Germany. In fact, Schabowski's rather casual statements marked the beginning of a memorable night and the end of the infamous Berlin Wall. The decision to open the borders of the GDR was a desperate attempt by the SED leadership to bolster its own popularity and stop the demonstrations and continuing flight of its citizens. Instead of showing gratitude to the SED, citizens voted with their feet in the following weeks and months, leaving the GDR at a rate of 2,000 per day.

After November 9, 1989, the political hierarchy in the GDR started to crumble. On November 18, 1989, the East German People's Chamber, or Volkskammer, elected Hans Modrow, a representative of the reform-minded elements in the SED, to the then relatively powerless post of prime minister. Modrow managed to turn his office into a more influential instrument of political power after the Volkskammer on December 1 repealed the section of the constitution that provided for the "leadership role" of the Socialist Unity Party, and after the entire SED leadership resigned on December 3. Although his reformist credentials equipped Modrow with some, albeit a very limited, degree of legitimacy, he lacked the kind of legitimacy derived from free and democratic elections. When the power apparatus of the Communist system started to disintegrate further, the

Modrow government agreed to negotiate with the most prominent dissident groups and newly formed political parties in the form of "round table" (*Der Runde Tisch*) discussions. The round table held its first session on December 7 and continued to meet until March 12, 1990. The leadership's announcement in January 1990 that free elections would be held in May of that year represented a last-ditch effort to save the GDR as an independent state. But it came too late. The end of the GDR as a sovereign state came in sight: The GDR had little reason to exist separately from West Germany if it was not a socialist state.

The round table negotiations were a dynamic phenomenon that went through several phases.<sup>3</sup> First, they served to delegitimize and disarm the old power apparatus of the SED and the state security forces. Second, they led to the creation of a "government of national responsibility" (*Regierung der nationalen Verantwortung*) of which the round table was an integral part. And finally, this second phase led to a third stage in which the various contenders struggled for government control.

Initial plans for popular elections scheduled for May 1990 had to be shelved in favor of holding elections for a new East German Volkskammer on March 18, 1990, while the mass exodus of citizens to West Germany continued unabated and the political structure of the Communist state showed increased signs of deterioration. This transitional period between the fall of the Berlin Wall and the elections of March 18, 1990, was heavily influenced by a sense of power vacuum, with the formal instruments of power and the institutions of the old regime still in place but with no clearly identifiable political actors in charge. The Modrow government lacked democratic legitimacy; however, those forces with popular backing were not yet formally part of the institutionalized political process. The elections scheduled for March were designed to alleviate this problem and install legitimate political actors as representatives for the East German state, because the ongoing political process required actors that were able to conduct business on behalf of the East German state without the liabilities that had frustrated and inhibited the Modrow government.

The elections to the East German Volkskammer were the first and last free and democratic countrywide elections held in the GDR, and they were dominated by a single overarching issue: the pace of German unification. Along with the organizations that had been instrumental in bringing about the peaceful ouster of the Communists in 1989, a total of twenty-four parties competed in these elections. The most important parties were the newly founded left-leaning Social Democrats and the more conservative Alliance for Germany. The Social Democratic Party had been formed in October 1989 and had originally been called SDP, but it was then "adopted" and supported by its big brother from West Germany, the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD). The Alliance for Germany was designed by the West German electoral managers of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian

Democratic Union (CDU). It consisted of the bigger Christian Democratic Union and two smaller parties, the German Social Union (DSU) and Democratic Awakening (DA). The Social Democratic Party had traditionally been strong in the eastern part of Germany before the Soviet occupation, and it had not had ties with the Communist regime. In that regard the Social Democrats were different from the CDU, which had once been a "puppet party" in the Communist-controlled National Front. In early March, the SPD was heavily favored to win the election contest. Instead, the resounding winner in the election was the Alliance for Germany, which had run on a platform of free-market economic reforms and, most important, unification as quickly as possible. The Social Democrats and the Communist SED (now renamed the Party of Democratic Socialism, or PDS) were trounced. These election results had important implications for the dynamics of the unification process because they installed the CDU politician Lothar de Maizière as the East German prime minister; he initially governed in a grand coalition with the Social Democrats.

On February 7, 1990, more than a month before the election, the West German government had offered East Germany immediate negotiations toward the creation of a monetary union and an economic community. It had been proposed that the East German Ost Mark be replaced by the West German Deutsche Mark on a yet-to-be-determined date. At the same time, the GDR was expected to create the conditions for the introduction of a market economy. The two German governments quickly took up this proposal after the election, because the East Germans seemed to have expressed their desire for a quick conclusion of the unification process and Chancellor Kohl had campaigned heavily on this issue. The core of the Economic, Monetary, and Social Union Treaty that was signed by the two Germanies on May 18, 1990, and went into effect on July 2 consisted of the introduction of the West German currency. The introduction of "good money" and the treaty in general had, and continue to have, significant implications for all aspects of the East German and West German societies and economies-implications that can hardly be overstated, as they have affected wages, salaries, prices of goods, inflation and credit, welfare benefits and pensions, aspects of economic cooperation in the European Community, taxation and public debts, and the structure of the economies.

The international attitude toward these proceedings encouraged the two German states to move toward unification. Negotiations known as the two-plus-four talks between the two German states and the four occupying powers were initiated to settle the unresolved issue of granting Germany full sovereignty. The Soviet Union, with some 300,000 troops stationed in the GDR and an historical distrust of Germany, was the potential major international obstacle to German unification. But with promises of sizable loans and payments for the resettlement of Soviet troops, the Federal

Republic was able to convince the Soviets to go along with German plans for unification. With the Soviets satisfied, and the Western powers willing to accept German unification, the road to unification was clear when the Allies granted full sovereignty to Germany just before formal unification.

Although the two-plus-four talks proceeded smoothly, monetary union turned out to be a disaster for the GDR economy. East Germans exchanged their worthless Ost Marks for the valuable D-Mark at a one-to-one rate, and then proceeded to buy only Western products. As the East German economy collapsed, the calls for immediate unification came not only from the CDU and its allies but also from the Social Democrats, who felt the Federal Republic had a responsibility to aid the East because of the effects of the monetary union.

The express desire of East German citizens to speed up the process of unification moved the debate about the process of formal political unification to the forefront. How was the political unity of the two Germanies to be accomplished? The political actors in Bonn and Berlin chose the quickest possible route to unification. On August 31, 1990, the two Germanies signed a second treaty, called a Unification Treaty, that stated in Article 1:

Upon the accession of the German Democratic Republic to the Federal Republic of Germany in accordance with Article 23 of the Basic Law taking effect on 3 October 1990 the Länder of Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia shall become Länder of the Federal Republic of Germany. The establishment of these Länder and their boundaries shall be governed by the provisions of the Constitutional Act of 22 July 1990 on the Establishment of Länder in the German Democratic Republic . . .

East Germany reestablished once-existing states and acceded to West Germany on October 3. Thus, the unification of Germany was formally completed less than eleven months after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Yet these new states did not have democratically elected governments. In order to institute such governments, state and local elections were held in all five new Länder and Berlin on October 14. Except for one state (Brandenburg), the CDU dominated the elections and won either an absolute majority (Saxony), or formed coalitions with the Free Democratic Party (FDP), its coalition partner in Bonn. Hence, the electoral success which the Christian Democrats had experienced in March was repeated at the state (Länder) level.

It became apparent in late summer of 1990 that the 1990 West German elections, which had initially been planned as the regular Bundestag elections for the old Federal Republic, would be the first free all-German elections since the 1932 Weimar Republic elections. It did not come as a surprise that the national elections held on December 2 were also dominated