

Documents in Modern History



The making of German democracy

West Germany during
the Adenauer era, 1945–65

ARMIN GRÜNBACHER



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Dedicated to my father Hermann
and
in memory of my mother-in-law Maria Schwarz,
who both made the 1950s so much more interesting for
me by sharing some of their personal experiences
of the time with me.

Preface

‘German history did not end on 8 May 1945.’ Sometimes it seems difficult to bring this message across to a generation of students whose only interest appears to be the history of the Nazis. However, during several years of teaching twentieth-century German history, both on the Nazis and on the post-war period, I encountered an increasing student interest in ‘what happened after Hitler’. Satisfying this interest, in particular in form of a source-based teaching module, proved to be difficult. Although most aspects of post-war German history up to the 1970s have been explored by now in countless books and articles, no comprehensive collection of sources were available in English which made teaching such a module to non-German-speaking students quite difficult. It is hoped that with this source reader a tool is provided for teachers, lecturers and students that will allow them to take a closer look at developments in post-war Germany during the period from 1945 to the mid-1960s.

Overall, less than 20 per cent of all documents used in this reader have ever been published in English before. Most of those were taken from two sources: either from Beate Ruhm von Oppen’s *Documents on Germany under Occupation, 1945-1954*, an edition of laws, ordinances and directives issued by the Allies during 1945-1954, including treaties the Western Allies concluded with West Germany; or, in a larger part, from publications by the US State Department. The latter include the *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)* and the Cold War-driven publication series *Documents on Germany*. The scope of these documents is limited to diplomatic issues and some political topics as well as military- strategic considerations.

Some 80 per cent of all documents used in the book are available in English for the first time, with about one-fifth of the total previously unpublished primary sources. A wide variety of source readers on the topic is available in German. They contain sources

Preface

on the everyday life of ordinary people and social, political and economic matters during the Adenauer era. I would like to express my thanks – not only, but in particular – to Professor Annette Kuhn, Professor Werner Abelshauser, Professor Werner Bührer and Professor Christoph Kleßman for their kind permission to use some of their sources. Special thanks has to go to Robert Kreis of the Bundespresseamt, the German Federal Press office, for his efficient service and selection of photographs. It is hoped that the sources and images will help contemporary students to understand the events of the ‘long 1950s’ and the transformation that occurred in West Germany during those years.

In (West) Germany, the period 1945–63 is called the Adenauer era, after the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. While having his fair share of flaws and, of course, not being the only one who contributed to ‘the making of German Democracy’, Adenauer remains the central figure in this process, and therefore a certain number of sources deal specifically with his person and his policies.

It is my hope that this source reader will shed some more light on particular events and developments in post-war West German history; it is even more my hope that it will encourage more students to develop a real interest in ‘what happened in Germany after Hitler’ and why the Cold War was so important in shaping the country’s development after 1945. Specific German words in the sources which are difficult to translate as well as some key phrases of the time have been italicised in the text to stress their original meaning or significance. Here I am happy to acknowledge the help of Phil Hotchkiss who proofread my translations and came up with better English alternatives – any remaining mistakes and ‘Germanisms’ are, of course, mine.

I also wish to thank my colleagues Corey Ross and John Grenville who read and commented on an earlier draft and gave inspirational advice respectively. I am particularly grateful to Sabine Lee. Her feedback and the comments she gave and the suggestion she made were, as usual, well beyond what could be expected from a colleague. Finally I want to say thanks to my wife Juliane Schwarz. I am immensely grateful for all the interest she showed in, and all her encouragement she gave to me during, the compilation of this book. It made my work so much easier.

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List of abbreviations

ACDP	Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik
BDA	Bundesverband deutscher Arbeitgeberverbände (Federation of German Employer Associations)
BDI	Bundesverband der deutschen Industrie
BHE/GB	Block der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten/Gesamtdeutscher Block
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union
CEEC	Conference for European Economic Co-operation
CFM	Conference of Foreign Ministers
CSU	Christlich Soziale Union
DGB	Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund
DM	Deutsche Mark
ECA	Economic Co-operation Administration
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	European Defence Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EPU	European Payments Union
ERP	European Recovery Programme
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
GARIOA	Government Appropriations for Relief in Occupied Areas
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDR	German Democratic Republic
IHG	<i>Investitionshilfegesetz</i>
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands
MP	Member of Parliament
MSA	Mutual Security Agency

List of Abbreviations

NA PRO	National Archive, Public Record Office
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische deutsche Arbeiterpartei
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Co-operation
OMGUS	Office of the Military Government, US, in Germany
POW	Prisoner of War
RM	Reichsmark
RWWA	Rheinisch-Westfälisches Wirtschafts Archiv
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands
SRP	Sozialistische Reichspartei
StEG	Staatliche Erfassungsgesellschaft für öffentliches Gut
WEU	Western European Union

Chronology of events in post-war Germany

1945

- 4–11 Feb Yalta Conference: The 'Big Three' decide to divide Germany into zones of occupation with a joint administration.
- 8 May Unconditional surrender of the Wehrmacht.
- 23 May Dönitz Government arrested.
- 5 June 'Berlin Declaration': Four Powers assume supreme authority over Germany.
- 17 July–2 Aug Potsdam Conference: 'Big Three' (later joined by France) confirm Yalta; Announcement of the '4 Ds'; reparations from ongoing production and dismantling in respective zones but Germany treated as an economic unit; territories east of the rivers Oder and Neisse put under Polish and Russian administration respectively; resettlement of ethnic Germans from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Hungary (resettlement details confirmed in November).
- 10 Sept–2 Oct First Conference of Foreign Ministers (CFM) in London: France demands separation of the Ruhr, the Russians a central German government and international control of the Ruhr.
- 17 Oct Establishment of the *Länderrat* (council) in the US zone.

1946

- 26 March Announcement of the (1.) Industry Plan: Allied Control Council limits German industrial output to 70–75 per cent of 1936; 1800 plants to be dismantled.
- 25 April–12 July Second CFM in Paris, the US calls for a merger of the 4 zones (merger accepted by UK on 29 July); USSR demands \$10 billion in reparations, 4-Power control of the Ruhr and hints at German reunification.
- 6 September Byrnes's Stuttgart Speech

Chronology of events in post-war Germany

10 Sept–1 Oct	Treaties for the establishment of 5 (bizonal) Administrations signed (Food, Transport, Economics, Finance, Mail, all located in different places).
4 Nov–11 Dec	Third CFM in New York, Germany not being discussed.
2 Dec	Treaty for the economic merger of the US and GB zones signed by Bevin and Byrnes.

1947

1 Jan	Official start of the 'Bizone' <i>Vereinigtes Wirtschaftsgebiet</i> (Joint Economic Area).
1–3 Feb	CDU Ahlen Programme passed.
10 March–24 April	Fourth CFM in Moscow, terminated without agreement.
12 March	Truman Doctrine
29 May	Agreement signed by UK-US Military Governors to centralise the 5 German Administrations in Frankfurt and to establish a parliamentary body (Economic Council) and an Executive Council of states' representatives to direct the Administrations (takes effect 10 June).
6 June	Harvard Speech by US Secretary of State Marshall announces European Recovery Programme.
6–8 June	Munich Conference of Minister Presidents. Its failure symbolises the German division.
25 June	First meeting of the Economic Council (52 members sent by the 8 state Parliaments).
11 July	JCS 1779 allows for the economic reconstruction of (West) Germany.
24 July	First election of the Administrations' Directors (=Ministers). All posts go to CDU/CSU due to strategic blunder by the SPD.
29 Aug	Revised Industrial Plan allows industrial production of 1936.
16 Oct/7 Nov	New dismantling list: 682 plants in the Bizone, 236 in the French zone.
25 Nov–15 Dec	Fifth CFM in London terminated early.

1948

7–8 Jan	Conference of the Military Governors with the Minister Presidents on how to reform the Bizone.
9 Feb	'Frankfurt Charter' takes effect: doubling the number of Economic Council members to 104, established a <i>Länderrat</i> (State Council) as second chamber to

Chronology of events in post-war Germany

	replace the (old) Executive Council; (new) Executive Council made up of the Administrations' Directors with a Chairman of the Executive Council (<i>Oberdirektor</i>) as quasi head of government.
23 Feb–6 March	London 6 Power Conference (first phase) (US, UK, F, B, NL, Lux) recommends establishing a West German state based on a federal structure and accepting it into the Marshall Plan.
1 March	Establishment of the <i>Bank deutscher Länder</i> (from 1957 Bundesbank).
17 March	Brussels (Defence) Treaty by GB, F, B, NL, Lux.
20 March	Termination of Allied Control Council by the Soviet Union (SU) out of protest against the London 6 Power Conference and the Brussels Treaty – End of 4-Power control over Germany.
1 April	Beginning of the 'Little' Blockade of Berlin by the SU by implementing traffic inspections.
16 April	OEEC established.
20 April–4 June	London 6-Power Conference (second phase) ends with the 'London Recommendations': Military Governors to authorise Minister Presidents to set up a Constitutional Assembly.
20 April–8 June	'Rothwesen Conclave': German financial experts prepare the currency reform.
20 June	Currency Reform in 3 Western zones.
21/24 June	' <i>Leitsätze Gesetz</i> ' abolishes all rationing and price controls (except for basic food, fuel, rent and steel).
24 June	Begin of the Berlin Blockade and subsequent Berlin Airlift.
1 July	'Frankfurt Documents' delivered to the West German Minister Presidents.
8–10 July	Koblenz Conference of Minister Presidents (<i>Rittersturz Conference</i>) accepts the Allied instruction for the creation of a new state but applies conditions which are refused by the Allies.
21/22 July	Niederwald Conference of German Minister Presidents finds compromise to accept Frankfurt Documents.
26 July	Final meeting over Frankfurt Documents between Military Governors and Minister Presidents in which the Germans concede on the substance and the Allies on the terminology.
10–23 Aug	West German experts drafts principles for a constitution (Basic Law) (<i>Herrenchiemseer Verfassungskonvent</i>).