

Nikolas R. Dörr

Adenauer, Marshall and Freedom in Europe

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Ladies and gentlemen,

today is a good day to think about German-American relations. A few hours ago, during his state visit, U.S. President Barack Obama held a speech at the Brandenburg Gate and almost exactly fifty years ago – on 26 June 1963 – John F. Kennedy famously proclaimed „Ich bin ein Berliner“ in front of the Rathaus Schöneberg.

„Adenauer, Marshall and Freedom in Europe“– It is a comprehensive topic. Konrad Adenauer and George C. Marshall were globally two of the most important politicians in the post-war period. Numerous publications have been brought out about both of them: monographs, anthologies, even illustrated books, to say nothing of the multitude of articles in scientific and journalistic media.

In this talk, I will focus on the immediate post-war period, in which both politicians reached the peak of their prowess. You see Konrad Adenauer, first Federal German Chancellor from 1949 and leader of the CDU from 1950 to 1966, as Time magazine's „Man of the Year“ in 1953 with very nice symbolism in the background: showing a new tree growing, slowly but surely, from the old German oak shattered after the loss of the World War. This was seen to be, above all, economic growth. This evening's second protagonist is George Catlett Marshall, Chief of Staff of the U.S. army in the Second World War, politically independent Secretary of State between 1947 and 1949 as well as Secretary of Defense 1950 to 1951. His most well-known legacy is certainly the *European Recovery Program*, which colloquially carries his name and is known as the Marshall Plan. I will talk about it later in more detail.

The post-war years were marked by the beginnings of the Cold War, which would especially, since the Potsdam Conference de facto and since 1949 also de jure, result in extreme measures concerning Germany's division. Since 1947, under the signum of the so-called *Containment Policy*, the United States tried to actively hold back the spread of communism or rather as the literal meaning of the word *Containment* reveals, contain it. The

Containment policy can be seen to be a direct reaction to the Soviet Union's endeavours to expand communism's influence in the post-war period especially in Eastern Europe and Asia. It is known that in later years the arenas of Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean played an important role.

In the USA, in the immediate post-war period, the *Containment* policy won through against the more radical variants of the so-called „*Rollback*“. As the name indicates, this strategy should have, not only, brought about a containment of the communist's sphere of power but have also pursued an offensive forcing back communism. This would have also meant, in the end, a military forcing back of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe – in practice a hardly viable policy.

The term *Containment* originally goes back to the then U.S. diplomat George F. Kennan. In February 1946 Kennan, at that time diplomat at the American Embassy in Moscow, sent a long analysis of Soviet objectives to the U.S. state department.¹ This letter known in research as „*long telegram*“ contained the demand for a clear containment policy, in order to set limits for Soviet expansion. Kennan had orientated himself to the „*Cordon sanitaire*“ concept. For the first time after the Russian October Revolution in 1917, the French president Georges Clemenceau spoke out, in March 1919, in favour of such a „*cordon sanitaire*“, that is a belt of non-communist states around Russia and respectively a short time later, the Soviet Union. This „*cordon sanitaire*“ should have prevented the spread of communism. Most of the West European states and also the USA endorsed this policy. Not until Adolf Hitler's rise to German Chancellor almost exactly 80 years ago did most western states dissociate themselves from this position and looked for a rapprochement to the Soviet Union. However at the end of the war the USA quickly returned to the (from that point on) „*Containment*“ named strategy of containing communism.

After the death of the popular U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt on 12 April 1945, Harry S. Truman was sworn in as the new President and became a clear supporter of the *Containment* policy and carried this through against prominent resistance. The then Supreme High Commander of the Heer and nationally recognised war hero Dwight D. Eisenhower came out in favour of the more radical variant of „*Rollback*“. Though it is worth taking into account that Eisenhower also, after being chosen to be Truman's successor in the presidential office on 4 November 1952, retained the containment policy and not, as the *Rollback* doctrine had asked for, support the national uprising with troops against the communist dictatorship in Hungary in 1956.

¹ <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/coldwar/documents/episode-1/kennan.htm>

During the Cold War, for the following U.S. Presidents, *Containment* remained as a core policy in dealing with the Soviet Union. The *Containment* policy was most notably modified in the period of the policy of détente in the 1970s under Nixon, Ford and Kissinger as well as through a more offensive policy, which included *Rollback* elements, under U.S. President Ronald Reagan at the beginning of the 1980s.

The *Containment* policy's operationalisation began under Truman with the announcement of the so-called Truman Doctrine. In his speech, addressing a joint session of Congress of the American parliament, in other words the Senate and the House of Representatives, Truman explained the purpose of the *Containment* policy. I quote President Truman's address to the Congress on 12 March 1947:

„At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one. One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms. I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way. I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes [...] The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedoms. If we falter in our leadership, we may endanger the peace of the world - and we shall surely endanger the welfare of this Nation.“²

In this speech the President of Congress asked for the granting of 400 million U.S. dollars emergency aid for the support of anti-communist measures in Greece and Turkey. The communists had started a civil war in Greece with Soviet and Yugoslavian support.

Alongside the fact of an obvious Soviet urge for territorial expansion, a domestic issue went towards the emergence of the Truman Doctrine. In the 1946 elections the Republican Party had won the majority in the Congress. Truman, like his predecessor Roosevelt, member of the Democratic Party, had to now approach the Republicans with regards to his foreign and security policies, in order to keep the majority in parliament for his policies. A tougher stance against Soviet communism was therefore advisable.

² http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp

If nothing else the transition towards the *Containment* policy under Truman was due to pressure from the West European Allies. The British government, severely financially stricken by the war, made it clear, that the costs of supporting an anti-communist resistance in Greece could not be met for much longer. The U.S. government therefore had to assume the role of western protecting power in Europe.

In the subsequent months and years, the Truman administration initiated a series of sanctions in the interests of the *Containment* policy. In January 1947 Truman appointed the war hero George C. Marshall as Secretary of State and he played a significant role in this policy. The *European Recovery Program* was developed with Marshall in charge. And in April 1949 a mutual, military defense alliance of Western States was established with NATO.

The restructuring of institutions in terms of security policy initiated under Truman played a central role in the implementation of the *Containment* policy. With the *National Security Act* in July 1947 the National Security Council, with the position of National Security Advisor of the President, was created. The to date separate ministeries for the marines, army and the air-force were combined in a Ministry of Defense and the *Central Intelligence Agency* (CIA) was founded as a new foreign-intelligence agency. The latter should above all provide efforts to throw light on communist infiltration endeavours and support corresponding counter-measures in the respective nations.

The newly founded CIA's first actions (thanks to the *National Security Act* in September 1947) concerned measures against the growing influence of communists in two southern European countries: Italy and Greece. The U.S. government also drew up plans, for both nations, for military intervention should the communists seize power there. It was unclear what position would be taken in the event of a Communist Party win in democratic elections – a definitely realistic possibility after the war. After the war, most notably, the large French and Italian Communist Parties gained a relatively high election outcome. Both were mass-based parties, with, in the French case, almost 400,000 members post-war and in the Italian case actually just under 2 million members. The Italian Communist Party was at that time the party with most members in the whole of Western Europe. Between 1945 and 1950 the Communist Party gained over 10 per cent of the votes in Belgium, the Netherlands, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Finland, San Marino, Luxembourg and in the Free Territory of Trieste. The Communist parties won less than 10 percent of the electoral votes in only the Federal Republic of Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Ireland and Great Britain in the first post-war elections. Of all the democratic countries in Western Europe, solely Ireland had no Communist Party represented in parliament after the first post-war elections. In France,

after the first post-war election in October 1945, there was even the case that the Communist Party was voted in as the country's strongest party. However in France, it was generally agreed in the U.S. Department of State, that one could not effectuate the same impact and authority as in Italy and Greece. After, as a result of U.S. American support during the Greek Civil War, which was decided in favour of the Civil Party, Italy represented the main danger for a Communist seizure of power in Western Europe. The U.S. Department of State, led by George Marshall, therefore established plans for extensive benefits for non-communist parties in Italy, which from 1947 were vehemently implemented.

The *Democrazia Cristiana*, Italy's Christian Democratic Party, under Alcide De Gasperi, a close friend of Adenauers, profited the most from these benefits. The U.S. government's sanctions, that proceeded partly disclosed, partly undisclosed through the corresponding intelligence services, showed success. At the end of 1947 the CIA had predicted another electoral victory of the popular front from the Communist and Socialist Party in the Italian parliamentary elections in April 1948 but the Christian Democrats gained an absolute majority. Here you can see a few especially good specimens of the *Democrazia Cristiana*'s election posters: on the poster on the left you can see the Soviet flag breaking up the Italian Tricolour and with that symbolically the Italian nation. In the middle it says: „Mother, save your children from Bolshevism, vote Christian Democratic! “ and especially good is the right-hand poster, that points to the close interlocking of the *Democrazia Cristiana* and the Vatican: „Nel segreto della cabina elettorale: Dio ti vede, Stalin no“ = „In the secrecy of the polling booth God can see you, but Stalin can't.“

If you have seen Don Camillo and Peppone, you can imagine that this sentence would have left behind an impression in this profoundly Catholic country. With the help of U.S. American funds, massive media use was made especially possible. One must also comment that at that time, as of the seventies this changed a little, Italy's Communist Party also received high sums of money for canvassing from Moscow.

However the *Containment* policy had its hardest test to pass in 1950. After the outbreak of the Korean War, U.S. President Truman sympathised for a short time with a *Rollback* policy as the U.S. army advanced on North Korea, then however after a Chinese-supported counter offensive reverted back to *Containment* again and disempowered the World War hero General Douglas MacArthur, who had campaigned openly for the use of atomic bombs against Mao's China. The effects of communist aggression in Korea are for further American policies but also for the Federal Republic of Germany, with respect to communism, not to be underestimated. In June 1950, with the North Korean invasion of South Korea, for

the first time since the Second World War, it came to a large-scale military attempt to expand the communistic sphere of influence. After the United Nations's security council had condemned the attack, with resolution 85, as against international law, it resulted in a counter-attack (led by the USA) to defend South Korea. The resolution only became possible because the Soviet representative, who, as is well known, had a right of veto in the security council, boycotted the session out of protest against Taiwan's recognition as China's representation in the security council. The war did not end in deadlock until 1953. However, the USA had made it clear that they would not tolerate any expansion of the communistic sphere of influence. In the following years and decades almost every U.S. government reacted with open or undisclosed military counter-measures if it came to communist growth. The most well-known of them being the failed invasion of the Cuban Bay of Pigs in April 1961, which was against the Castro government. The U.S. government also reacted with military counter-measures in Africa – for example in Angola –, in Asia, remember also the Vietnam War, in Latin America, among others in Nicaragua, or in the Caribbean, for example the successful invasion of the insular state of Grenada in 1983.

George Marshall was also reactivated for the Korean War. Marshall had actually, after he had ended his term in office as Secretary of State in 1949, retired to *Dodona Manor* in Leesburg. When a defeat of the U.S. troops in the Korean War was looming, Marshall was called out of retirement by a request from President Truman, in order to take over the Ministry of Defense. Marshall launched a restructuring of the ministry which essentially contributed to preventing the defeat of U.S. troops. The name George Marshall was, however, linked more strongly with the colloquially named Marshall Plan than with his accomplishment in the Korean War.

In 1947, when George Marshall announced the idea of a recovery plan for Europe, European economies were still clearly below their pre-war level of performance. Added to that about five million apartments and houses had been destroyed in the three German western zones, almost ten percent of the German pre-war population – about 6.8 million people – had lost their lives and now just under twelve million refugees from the former Eastern territories and the Soviet occupation zone had to be integrated.

Already in the years before the Marshall Plan, just under four billion U.S. dollars in the form of food and other goods flowed through the *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (financed, above all, by the USA) as well as through private aid agencies like CARE to Europe. The U.S. government assigned bilaterally a further 14 billion as loans before the start of the ERP, the majority to France and Great Britain.

In June 1947 Marshall finally announced the idea of a European Recovery Plan during a speech at *Harvard University*. Within a short time he gained support from the President and both parties for his project. In the four years between 1948 and 1952 the USA pumped almost 13 billion U.S. dollars into the languishing West European countries. Similarly high amounts were also given by the U.S. government to Asian countries – albeit only on a bilateral level. With financial aid, especially India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea and the Philippines were supposed to be kept in the Western camp.

The exact impact of the Marshall plan on Germany is disputed by historians. Economic historians, for example Werner Abelshauser, assume that the Marshall Plan was not the decisive factor for the subsequent economic miracle but accelerated and strengthened it for a long time. However it is beyond question that the Marshall Plan helped a lot. Nevertheless further aspects played a role in the stabilisation and subsequent growth of the German economy, for example the heightened demand for German exports during the Korean War.

Marshall, with the Plan, had learnt his lessons from the contact with the loser countries of the First World War. There should not be a second Treaty of Versailles. Also the aggressor countries, so above all Germany, had to be rebuilt, if peace was to be secured for the future. As a result Marshall vehemently resisted Henry Morgenthau's (U.S. Secretary of the Treasury) articulated idea, in September 1944, of a complete deindustrialisation of Germany that would have changed the country into a purely agricultural state.

In an almost perfect way the Marshall Plan connected humanitarian aspects with elements from the *Containment* policy. On the one hand people in the widely destroyed areas of Europe should be helped with survival and reconstruction. On the other hand the Marshall Plan should carry out a political power of persuasion against communism. Of course the ERP also had a domestic component for the USA. With Marshall Plan aid, West European governments and companies should have bought predominantly products from the USA. With the reconstruction of Western Europe the United States created a big sales market for its own economy.

At the end of the day each of the three named goals were reached through the Marshall Plan: humanitarian suffering was alleviated, Western European countries predominantly opposed communism and it brought a massive economic growth for the participating countries.

It was clear to see that the Soviet Union recognised the Plan's potential at an early stage because it forbid its satellite countries from being accepted in the program. Especially

Poland and Czechoslovakia had previously shown interest in the American initiative and wanted to take part in the Paris Conference of 12 July 1947, in which negotiations about the Marshall Plan's terms would be discussed. However, Stalin got his own way and therefore no Eastern European country participated in the Marshall Plan. Following Soviet refusal of the Marshall Plan, it was called for that West European Communist Parties conduct a propaganda campaign against the aid program. The big Communist parties in Italy and France actively took part in this campaign. Here you can see some excesses of this battle against the Marshall Plan: the PCF, in other words the *Parti Communiste Francais*, shows the USA here as a greedy octopus with dollar signs in its eyes and it boasts the lettering: „La France ne sera pas un pays colonisé. Les Américains en Amérique!“ („France will never become a colonised country. Americans back to America!“). The PCI, the *Partito Comunista Italiano*, used a detailed poster against the Plan with the title: „Piano Marshall...aiuti per la guerra“ („The Marshall Plan, relief supplies for the war“). You can see on the propaganda poster as well as on the box with the U.S. American flag, weapons are falling out instead of food.

The Soviet Union with respect to its satellite countries worked with pressure and their own offers of help. Ultimately the Soviet Secretary of State brought out his own scheme as competition to the Marshall Plan. However, the Molotov Plan (named after himself), that shortly after in 1949, led to COMECON (council for mutual economic assistance of socialist countries), never developed the virtuous economic circle of the Marshall Plan. The West European countries, however, with the exception of fascist Spain, Finland and the microstates of Andorra, Monaco, San Marino and Liechtenstein, all participated in the Marshall Plan. The Free Territory of Trieste also counted as a nation until it was divided between Italy and Yugoslavia in 1954.

The 16 West European countries, which finally participated in the Paris Conference in July 1947 – the three western occupied zones were incidentally not yet represented at the Conference in Paris – worked out a coordinated plan, that budgeted for a need of 22 billion U.S. dollars. At the end of the day President Truman had to reduce the plan by 5 billion dollars, so that he could count on the Congress's agreement. Finally a clear majority of the Congress voted in favour of the *European Cooperation Act*. As a result of the shock regarding Czechoslovakia's forced Sovietization by the February Coup in 1948 and the communist's electoral success in Western Europe, only a small group of Republicans (who wished for a return to isolationism of the pre-war period, and some left-wing Democrats, who warned of the Soviet Union's provocation) voted against Marshall Plan aid.

From June 1948 West European countries profited from the *European Recovery Program*, albeit in different amounts. Up to 1951 Iceland received 43 million U.S. dollars of reconstruction aid, whilst Great Britain received the lion's share with almost 3.3 billion U.S. dollars. The three West zones and from May 1949 the Federal Republic of Germany respectively received, in total, 1.45 billion dollars. With this, Germany was clearly ranked in third place of recipient nations, behind the United Kingdom and France. Convert the amounts into population numbers, Austria and the Netherlands profited the most from Marshall Plan aid.

Reconstruction aid was very important for the Federal Republic of Germany, which as well as Austria (of the belligerent nations in Western Europe), suffered from the most devastation. In the so-called winter of starvation in 1946/47 there were about 200,000 people who died of starvation in the three West zones alone. In 1946 after an extremely dry summer there were massive crop failures. Due to the large number of soldiers who had been killed there was a lack of labour in the countryside. Furthermore, the subsequent winter was crowned the coldest in Germany in the 20th century. As a result numerous waterways were iced up and thereby made the transport of food and fuel impossible. The first hunger protests came about in the three West zones. This situation also endangered political stability. Above all, the Communist Party of Germany (KPD), following the winter of starvation in the three western zones, could succeed. Only with the positive effects of the Marshall Plan from the middle of 1948 and the Soviet blockade of West Berlin between June 1948 and May 1949, did the KPD massively lose influence in the West. In the immediate post-war time, the communists, on the contrary, still had a share in almost all West German state governments, for a short time incidentally even in conservative Bavaria. In 1947/48 the KPD lost almost all government participation and registered partly heavy losses in the federal state elections.

In the first phase of Marshall Plan aid the recipient nations purchased, to begin with, essential products, above all staple foods, medicines, fuel and coal. In the second phase materials especially for reconstruction were purchased, for example, machines, building materials and the like and in the third and last phase, with the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, increasingly military supplies, in order to encourage the West European armies' reconstruction. Thereby a relatively large amount of freedom was given to the individual countries in dealing with Marshall Plan aid. The Federal Government under Chancellor Adenauer chose to issue a large proportion of the money as loans at extremely low terms. The idea – which turned out to be a short time later – extremely successful, was to lend money to private companies in this way, as a consequence reflate the economy and later, after the

repayment of the loan, improve, on one side, through taxes on corporate earnings, the financial basis of the German State. And on the other side to be able to give out new loans through the credit user's interest payments. A new separate authority was created in Frankfurt am Main solely for this purpose. The Reconstruction Loan Corporation (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau – KfW), which is to date still in use, administered these funds. Other governments, for example the French one, spent, by contrast, their aid for the most part state side on imports.

The reason Germany handled Marshall Plan aid very carefully and unlike other countries, as aforementioned for example France, only used funds in small measures for direct sales, had to do with the fact that Adenauer's government until 1953 assumed that as a former aggressor it had received the entire Marshall Plan aid as a loan and therefore would have to repay the amount in full. De facto most of the countries had received a large proportion of Marshall Plan aid in the form of a soft loan, the rest however as a direct gift from the United States.

A third of Germany's loan was waived after all thanks to the London debt agreement of 1953 and the Federal Government had to repay only 1 billion U.S. dollars to the U.S. government. The Federal Republic of Germany was thereby treated just about equal to France and Great Britain. Considering who had started the war this was an extremely generous provision. In 1971 the Federal Government had finally repaid its last instalment of Marshall Plan aid to the USA.

Furthermore, an integral part of the Marshall Plan was a scheme of consultation for European governments by technical experts from the USA as well as an exchange programme, that allowed up to 1952 24,000 engineers, entrepreneurs, administrative and economic experts to come from Western Europe to the USA. This exchange of expertise was associated with comparatively low costs and generated great economic and administrative progress for the West European countries.

In addition, a small amount of the Marshall Plan was invested in advertising efforts. This should raise not only acceptance of the plan but also convey political messages: in other words propagate especially anti-communism and free trade.

In 1953 George Marshall was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize above all for the reconstruction of West Europe after the Second World War. In 1959, shortly before his death, he also received the prestigious Charlemagne Prize of the City of Aachen for his accomplishments in respect of Europe's unification.

After U.S. President Truman had signed the law on 3 April 1948, which in turn put the *European Recovery Program* in motion, the *Economic Cooperation Administration* was created on the American side as an institution to manage the Marshall Plan. On the European side, the OEEC, the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation, undertook the program's administration. In 1961 it was transformed into its present shape, which still exists, OECD, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Here a further target of the Marshall Plan becomes apparent. With the foundation of the OEEC in 1948 an institution was created, where West European countries had to jointly agree on their policies. Consequently, the first step towards European integration had been taken by the introduction of the *European Recovery Program*. A development, which was intensified a short time later, with the foundation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 and above all in 1957 with the Treaty of Rome under Konrad Adenauer's significant involvement.

Adenauer's government created its own ministry for the implementation of the Marshall Plan in West Germany. Franz Blücher, FDP politician and vice-chancellor, became Federal Minister of Marshall Plan affairs. The ministry experienced many changes of name and was dissolved in 1969 under the name of the Federal Treasury.

On 15 September 1949, Konrad Adenauer was elected as the first Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany with a majority of only one, famously his own, vote. A strict policy against the spread of communism contributed to the narrow and unexpected election victory of the CDU/CSU in the first federal election. Even at the end of 1948, the SPD, with its frontrunner Kurt Schumacher, who physically showed signs of his, in total, 11-year imprisonment and torture in national socialistic concentration camps, was clearly ahead in opinion polls. On the election eve, the CDU/CSU was, however, able to chalk up a 1.8 percentage point margin over the SPD. Adenauer, together with the FDP and the German Party, could build the first Federal Government. This first, still rather unclear, Federal Parliament, comprised of eleven parties, including strange ones like the Southern Schleswig Voter Federation or the Bavaria Party. Thanks to the increase of the 5-percent hurdle on a federal level and the party system's consolidation, the number of parties decreased after the Federal Parliament elections in 1953 to 7 parties. In this election, the CDU/CSU was able to increase its outcome by 14 percent points and built once again a government with the FDP and the German Party, as well as the Federation of expellees and disenfranchised. In 1953, the Communist Party of Germany was already in demise and missed out on re-entry to the Federal Parliament by as little as 2.2 percent of the votes.

The elections of 1957 represented the peak of Adenauer's popularity. For the first, and to date, only time in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany, a party got an outright majority. With 50.2 percent gained, every second voter had decided for the CDU/CSU. Adenauer, however, for tactical reasons built a coalition with the German Party, whose delegates and members had almost completely joined the CDU by 1960.

Adenauer understood that, in these election campaigns, he had to present himself as a guarantor for economic recovery. Thereby he famously formed an extremely popular partnership with his Secretary of Commerce, Ludwig Erhard. With the incipient, massive growth in the course of the economic miracle from the beginning of the 1950s it was hardly possible to find fault with the Adenauer/Erhard team. At the same time Adenauer succeeded in bringing a firm idea of anti-communism to the general public. The electoral campaigns showed Adenauer to be, not only a defender of economic but, above all, political freedom in West Germany. You can see here some famous examples on election posters. Distinctive are, the red hand as a symbol of communism, the Brandenburg Gate as a memorial of Germany's division and evidence that all Marxism ways lead to Moscow. It is beyond question that Adenauer did not flinch from moving the Social Democratic Party temporarily near to the communists in these election campaigns. Yet also the SPD's staff and programmatic failures contributed to electoral defeats. I only remember Kurt Schumacher's evaluation saying, before the Presidential election of the Parliamentary Council, that Adenauer was clearly too old to then still strive for a political office. One could, therefore, choose him as President. In 1948 Schumacher still found the idea that Adenauer should stay for a total of 14 years as head of government as absolutely utopian.

Events such as the national uprising in the GDR on 17 June 1953 – two days ago this event was remembered on its 60th anniversary –, the Korean War, the suppression of the Hungarian uprising in 1956 and finally the Building of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 confirmed Adenauer's position towards communism. The majority of voters had no doubts about the course of integration with the West, rearmament and the Federal Republic of Germany's joining of NATO in 1955. Adenauer, together with politicians like Charles de Gaulle and Alcide De Gasperi, laid the foundation for a reconciliation of German people with their European neighbours. Adenauer never forgot that the foundations for this, lay with the Marshall Plan. He wrote about this in his memoirs: „A reconstruction of Germany was not possible without American aid, but also not without our own cooperation, our trust and our own will to rebuild either. German and European interests were completely identical and, I very much welcome, that Marshall in the explanation of his proposal, referred to the German

question as the centerpiece of the European question.“³ Not only commemorative stamps every once in a while but also institutions like the George Marshall Association make a contribution towards remembering the Marshall Plan’s provision. Today, I was therefore delighted to have the privilege of giving this speech as the first Marshall Association beneficiary.

Thank you for your attention!

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³ Konrad Adenauer: Erinnerungen, Band 1, 1945-1953, Stuttgart 1965, S. 122.

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