

“WASHINGTON AS A PLACE FOR THE GERMAN CAMPAIGN”: THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND THE CDU/CSU OPPOSITION, 1969–1972

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I.

In October 1969, Bonn's Christian Democrat-led "grand coalition" was replaced by an alliance of Social Democrats (SPD) and Free Democrats (FDP) led by Chancellor Willy Brandt that held a sixteen-seat majority in the West German parliament. Not only were the leaders of the CDU caught by surprise, but so, too, were many in the U.S. government. President Richard Nixon had to take back the premature message of congratulations extended to Chancellor Kiesinger early on election night. "The worst tragedy," Henry Kissinger concluded on June 16, 1971, in a conversation with Nixon, "is that election in '69. If this National Party, that extreme right wing party, had got three-tenths of one percent more, the Christian Democrats would be in office now."¹

American administrations and their embassy in Bonn had cultivated a close relationship with the leaders of the governing CDU/CSU for many years. The two sister parties were perceived as allies and mostly loyal followers of American policy, regular transatlantic bickering over various issues notwithstanding.² This predisposition survived the 1969 change of government in West Germany, particularly as Brandt's slim majority gradually eroded. For almost three years, right from the beginning of Brandt's tenure, a return of the CDU/CSU to power never seemed to be out of reach. Concluding an embassy report from October 12, 1969 on a conversation with designated CDU floor leader Rainer Barzel shortly before the Bundestag formally elected Brandt chancellor, U.S. Ambassador Kenneth Rush contended it would be in the American interest to further any tendencies of bipartisanship in the Federal Republic's foreign policy: "We also consider that while fully meeting the requirements of a close relationship with the new coalition, we should in our own interest extend to the CDU the kind of rough equality of treatment Barzel is proposing."³

When Kissinger stated in a memorandum to Nixon in July 1970 that the U.S. should avoid being held responsible for a possible collapse of the SPD-FDP coalition, the president wrote in the margin "I do not agree—any non-socialist government would be better."⁴ Learning his lesson from the Oval Office, on September 13, 1970, in another memorandum to

Nixon, Kissinger called the CDU “our friends” whom the U.S. must not “demoralize” by openly supporting the policy of the SPD-led government.⁵ In a taped conversation in the Oval Office with Kissinger on May 29, 1971, the president expressed his preference for the CDU over Brandt in his own distinctive style: “I don’t want to hurt our friends in Germany by catering to that son of a bitch.”⁶ According to Barzel, Nixon reiterated that stance in January 1972 in a more polite manner when the former was on official visit to the U.S., telling him off the record, “We stand by our old friends.”⁷

Such epithets were rarely used at that time for the members of the SPD leadership, aside from a few individuals such as Helmut Schmidt. Old loyalties notwithstanding, however, after October 1969 the U.S. government was forced to some extent to trade political or even personal friendships for overarching U.S. interests. Upholding these interests required a smooth working relationship with the Bonn government, regardless of which parties sat in it. At the same time, though, Washington maintained close contacts with the opposition parties, treating them as a kind of “shadow government.” More than once between 1970 and 1972, CDU/CSU leaders expressed firm convictions to U.S. officials on how they might be able to bring down the Brandt government at any time via parliamentary defeat or a non-confidence motion.⁸ Until late 1971, this might have been more bluff or self-delusional, wishful thinking on the part of an opposition still not ready to accept its loss of power after the electoral defeat of 1969.

When CDU envoy Kurt Birrenbach returned from a special mission to Washington in November 1971, he reported to his party that the U.S. government expected Brandt’s coalition to maintain its parliamentary majority and pass the Eastern treaties. Washington considered it impossible to interfere in the sovereignty of West Germany by taking sides in its internal political debates, which Birrenbach understood as part of the alleged American desire to keep a “low profile” in its foreign policy in the wake of a retreat from Vietnam.⁹ By early 1972, however, the CDU/CSU’s hope of splitting the governing coalition by additional defections from the FDP and SPD parliamentary caucuses had soared. In February of that year, Barzel was looking forward to overthrowing Brandt. At this time, he revealed his shadow cabinet to departing Ambassador Rush.¹⁰

II.

The U.S. government’s attempt to have things both ways with regard to the FRG was bound to cause tension. It attempted to display “neutrality” toward the domestic political conflicts in West Germany, following the White House double strategy of “no public endorsement of Brandt’s

policy” and “no public support for his CDU rivals.” Furthermore, there were differences of perception of German Ostpolitik within the administration itself. German politicians, from government and opposition alike, attempted to exploit such differences and were always eager to claim U.S. sympathy for their own foreign policy positions in appealing to the domestic audience.

At the pragmatic State Department, there was a lot of goodwill and also some strong endorsements of the Brandt government to be found. Secretary William Rogers and his deputy Elliot Richardson backed the Bonn chancellor and trusted him fully. In his first meeting with Brandt after the December 1969 German election, Rogers told him that the American government would welcome West German initiatives towards the East: “In Washington there haven’t been the slightest doubts about German intentions at any time.”¹¹ In the White House, however, the positions of German-born NSC officials Henry Kissinger and Helmut Sonnenfeldt ranged initially from skeptical to highly suspicious, albeit for personal and ideological reasons. Without leaving tracks or denying any involvement or instructions when asked, the White House capitalized on criticism by U.S. Embassy Minister Russell Fessenden in Bonn and occupation-era figures such as Dean Acheson, John J. McCloy, and Lucius D. Clay to sow doubts and express mistrust towards aspects of Brandt’s policy and his alleged lack of consultation with Washington.¹²

Undoubtedly, U.S. officials tried very hard not to be openly dragged into foreign debates and publicly favor partisan German interests. In many situations, they resisted the temptation to follow personal inclination. With National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) 91, neutrality towards partisan German positions had been adopted as a binding commitment for all departments and agencies within the U.S. government.¹³ When talking to Brandt during consultations in Key Biscayne on December 28 and 29, 1971, Nixon scrupulously avoided any hint of support for the forthcoming ratification of the Eastern treaties, and he also abstained from voicing any criticism. He only embraced the Berlin Agreement and told Brandt that he would also be seeing Barzel next week.¹⁴ Even during the heated political atmosphere in the FRG in April and May 1972, the Nixon administration showed remarkable self-discipline and did not “take sides,” at least before the failed no-confidence vote in the Bundestag on April 27, 1972. But then, according to a note from Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, “we expressed gratification to Brandt on his defeat of the no-confidence motion (which we did in the back channel to Bahr reporting on your Moscow trip).”¹⁵

The U.S. considered the embittered, divisive, and vicious debate in West Germany over Ostpolitik worrisome. Not surprisingly, it was Kissinger who, in a February 16, 1970, memorandum to Nixon, invoked the

German past when observing the domestic debate in the FRG. He stated that it "could in time produce the type of emotional and doctrinaire political argument that has paralyzed political life in Germany and some other West European countries in the past." Fearing the alleged loosening of Germany's Western ties, the National Security Adviser darkly alluded to a shaking of the FRG's domestic stability and an unhinging of its international position if Ostpolitik succeeded. "A very perceptive piece," Nixon wrote on the margins of this memorandum.¹⁶ When Barzel met with the American president on September 4, 1970, and April 18, 1971, Nixon delivered strong appeals to the German CDU politician to maintain the political stability of West Germany and preserve the post-1945 democratic achievements by responsible behavior and political restraint on the part of the parliamentary opposition.¹⁷

III.

In fact, however, the global foreign policy of Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger allowed the government in Bonn to pursue its Eastern policy with silent American endorsement. When Nixon decided to take public credit for the 1971 Berlin Agreement and hailed it as an important milestone in U.S.-Soviet relations, Moscow linked its consummation to the ratification of the Eastern treaties in Bonn, leaving hardly any alternative for the U.S. but to favor ratification. Much as Nixon and Kissinger might have wanted to believe the opposite, ratification was far from being just a German domestic problem whose outcome was of little interest to Washington. Under Secretary of State John Irwin was absolutely to the point when, on November 30, 1971, he defined the consequences of non-ratification as "chaos."¹⁸ The active U.S. involvement in the Berlin negotiations and the subsequent Soviet linkage to the Moscow Treaty's ratification had severely limited the American options in dealing with West Germany.

After its initial reluctance, the U.S. reserved for itself the dominant role of placing the capstone of the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin into the construction of the FRG's new policy toward the East. A case study of how government and opposition in Germany were involved by the U.S. to negotiate and finalize this agreement would easily demonstrate the futility of the CDU/CSU in using its undoubtedly more cordial U.S. ties for partisan gains. Even more than the State Department, the German political opposition had been kept in the dark about the highly secret back channel negotiations among the White House, the USSR, and the Bonn government. When CDU leaders at one point complained to the U.S. embassy in Bonn about certain "unacceptable" drafts of the Berlin agreement and blamed Brandt for them, even some American officials

did not know that the drafts were actually of American origin and had already been approved by the White House. The very few U.S. representatives who knew better were not authorized to enlighten CDU representatives on what was going on. For instance, in February 1971, Helmut Sonnenfeldt wrote, "This is tricky business," regarding a plea from CDU envoy Kurt Birrenbach for a meeting between Barzel and Nixon so that the former could express his grievances with a recent Brandt plan for the Berlin negotiations. The NSC official continued: "A CDU attack on the SPD in regard to the Berlin plan is also an attack on us, since we tabled it."¹⁹

IV.

After the electoral defeat in 1969, the CDU/CSU leadership was in disarray. Soon the rivals for the party's leadership began to compete with each other. Nominal leaders, like the party chairmen Kurt Georg Kiesinger (CDU) and Franz-Josef Strauss (CSU), did not want to conceal their highly confrontational attitude towards the new government and its policy. For a while, former Foreign Minister Gerhard Schröder (CDU) continued a statesmanlike and rather bipartisan approach. Rumors had it that he would be ready for the chancellorship in a future grand coalition between the CDU/CSU and the SPD. However, the new rising star of the political opposition was a strategist who aspired to become Brandt's successor as chancellor. This was Rainer Candidus Barzel, CDU/CSU caucus leader in the Bundestag. In 1971, he inherited Kiesinger's position as CDU party chairman with a clear victory over his opponent Helmut Kohl at the party's national conference in Saarbrücken on October 4, 1971.

Referring to these years in one of his three memoirs, Barzel later described Washington as another place for fighting the German electoral campaign.²⁰ If the West German elections could have been decided by the U.S. government alone, Barzel might have had a better chance of winning. Despite his only fair command of English, no German politician from the government or the opposition maintained such a close relationship with the U.S. He sought advice regularly and wanted to share his thoughts and concerns with American officials. In general, he presented himself as a politician desperate for bipartisanship in German foreign policy and as being much closer to Brandt's Eastern policy than most in his own party. On the other hand, he became increasingly embittered about Brandt's lack of consultation and trust in their personal relations. Brandt indeed did not want to share the potential political benefits and personal glory of Ostpolitik with Barzel. The Christian Democratic leader wanted to become an internationally respected statesman; he supported what he considered the sensible elements of Ostpolitik and hoped to get

credit for correcting its flaws. Within his parliamentary caucus, he wanted to keep at arms length the “two wild stallions” (Kiesinger and Strauss) and the many “unbroken mustangs,” the fervent anti-Ostpolitik deputies spoiling for a fight with the SPD. At least so he confided to Ambassador Rush on October 10, 1969, in Bonn. According to Rush’s report, Barzel “was sure that if his views were not followed, the result would be a stampede of the wild horses, to the detriment of German parliamentary democracy and of the standing of the CDU.”²¹ Had the CDU chairman voiced some of those thoughts even in closed party meetings, his colleagues might have dumped him from leadership positions immediately.

Jointly harvesting the fruits of an Ostpolitik he helped shape, Barzel initially hoped to bring Brandt down eventually on domestic policy issues and to succeed him in office. But continuing defections by SPD and FPD Bundestag deputies and, in particular, CDU exuberance following its electoral victory in Baden-Württemberg on April 24, 1972, prompted the CDU/CSU leadership to follow the lead of Barzel’s rivals: Helmut Kohl, Gerhard Schröder, and Franz-Josef Strauss. They pushed for a constructive no-confidence vote in the Bundestag on April 27 that might have replaced Brandt with Barzel immediately. Barzel himself was reluctant but went along. “The prospect of governing the FRG gave him little enthusiasm,” reported a U.S. embassy officer on April 24, “however, he did not believe there was another course.”²²

After vote-buying on both sides, a tie vote in the Bundestag left Brandt in office. The GDR Stasi’s foreign intelligence department might have given the edge to Brandt by placing at least two CDU/CSU deputies on its payroll. In any event, the opposition’s failed maneuver was rather unpopular with the West German public. Barzel paid the price with his defeat in the November 1972 national election. North Rhine-Westphalia state CDU chairman Heinrich Köppler told the American consul in Düsseldorf on December 13, 1972, that the April no-confidence motion was “a serious and dangerous mistake” on the part of the CDU/CSU. He “claimed he was the only one in the CDU executive who argued that a no-confidence vote should only be taken in connection with a government defeat on a major issue.” April 27, 1972, according to the CDU politician, constituted “the Federal Republic’s most serious political crisis.”²³

More than thirty years later, Rainer Barzel still claimed, “I modified the Eastern treaties! For them I put my political career at stake.”²⁴ It was a high-risk gamble he was ultimately to lose on two fronts—against Willy Brandt and against his inner-party rivals. In 2002, the 78-year old confessed: “Certainly I would have liked to become Federal Chancellor. I really believe I would have been able to do this job. I would have loved to do that.”²⁵

From early 1970 to the narrowly failed no-confidence motion of April 27, 1972, Barzel had either adopted the increasingly militant tendencies of his party or followed his U.S. partners' concerns and attempted to restrain his peers. Differing views on Ostpolitik in the CDU faction and the Bavaria-based CSU, led by constant irritant Franz Josef Strauss (who had ambitions for the chancellorship himself²⁶), made it difficult for the CDU leader to exercise his authority. Without being able to articulate a coherent CDU/CSU alternative to Brandt's Ostpolitik backed by a wide majority of his own party, or to envision a compelling alternative to the SPD-FDP approach, Barzel had to adopt the lowest common denominator. He welcomed treaties with the East in general but called the SPD-FDP agreements unduly hasty, sloppily negotiated, inattentive to vital West German positions, and certain to be modified by a FRG government led by himself.

Barzel's private statements made to his American conversation partners over the years were devoted to complaints about his own party, his personal rivals, and the best CDU line to pursue. But since he was the chairman of the CDU, he had to willingly follow a principle of Mahatma Gandhi, which the U.S. ambassador in Bonn, Kenneth Rush, nicely summed up on March 26, 1970: "I have to catch up to my people, for I am their leader." In the same embassy report, titled "The CDU's Increasing Militancy," Rush described Barzel as "ambitious and alert but possessed of no overwhelming conviction."²⁷

In his memoirs, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State and Ambassador to Germany Martin Hillenbrand called Barzel "my friend" and portrayed him as "a much troubled man anxious not to appear too negative but bound by the majority sentiment in the party he led." The astute American observer came close to the truth in arguing how Barzel would have taken the Eastern treaties "pretty much as they were," if it had not been for his party and the CSU under Franz Josef Strauss.²⁸ When Barzel was forced out of his CDU leadership positions by his rivals in 1973, Hillenbrand stated, "I and hence the U.S. government were losing a good source of information about the inner workings of the legislature and his party."²⁹ That was indeed the case. The many memoranda of conversations between Barzel and U.S. officials in Bonn and Washington between 1969 and 1973 may tell a true story about this politician, who ended up being soundly defeated at the West German polls and soon afterwards by partisan rivals, led by his successor Helmut Kohl, whom he heartily disliked. Unlike Kohl, who would master and lead his party for twenty five years along paths straight and crooked, the scrupulous Rainer Barzel was brought down by rival personalities within the CDU and CSU and a prevailing shortsightedness within his own party. Barzel was aware of these destructive features, but he could not overcome them with his

personal authority. This he painfully realized, and it embittered him deeply and led him to constantly complain of backstabbing.³⁰

Barzel was barely aware of his role as a comparatively minor player at that time in U.S. attempts at Realpolitik, which were crafted almost exclusively by the White House. Details of policy and Washington's secret diplomacy were hidden to him as much as they were to most of his American confidants. U.S. Realpolitik never offered him a genuine chance of gaining the level of support he sought in Washington for his political fight against Willy Brandt and his government. To the contrary, in many cases he damaged his leadership position in the CDU when he followed American advice and attempted to restrain or overcome opposition within his party on certain elements of the Eastern treaties and the Berlin agreement.³¹ Barzel insisted to the U.S. embassy in June 1972 that "he had been able to leave behind a situation where Eastern policy might have become an enduring political battlefield in the FRG, undermining the political stability of the Federal Republic. He believed that these were sizeable achievements in the common Western interest."³² The CDU leader thought he might have deserved outright American acknowledgement for such efforts in the aftermath, but his frequent pleas to U.S. officials went largely unheard.³³

Pursuing his personal ambitions to return the CDU/CSU to power in Bonn and to advance himself into the Chancellery, Barzel had to rely solely on domestic instruments of public partisan warfare and campaigning. Whereas the government of the United States of America conveyed to him the realities of Realpolitik, his domestic rival Willy Brandt taught him a painful lesson in how an united party could run an efficient and attractive campaign. Neither in Washington nor in West Germany was Rainer Barzel to gain electoral success. These failures, regardless of whether he deserved to be blamed for them, forced his own party to drive him out of his opposition leadership positions in 1973.

Notes

¹ Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, June 16, 1971. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Nixon Presidential Materials Project (NPMP), White House Tapes, Conversation 523-4. Kissinger referred to the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD), an openly neo-Nazi party, which gained 4.3 percent of the national vote and fell actually seven-tenths of a percent short of the constitutional five-percent-hurdle required to obtain seats in FRG parliament. With four instead of three parties in parliament, Willy Brandt could not have formed a coalition against the CDU/CSU, which still had emerged as the strongest single party from the September 1969 election. During a talk with Chancellor Kiesinger in Washington on August 8, 1969, Henry Kissinger had defined the contemporary student protest movements as "more Nazi" than the NPD (AAPD 1969, Vol. II, p. 907).

² Thomas A. Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe: In the Shadow of Vietnam* (Cambridge, Mass., 2003).

³ American Embassy Bonn to Secretary of State, October 12, 1969. Subject: CDU Leader Barzel on Future Political Situation. NARA, Record Group (RG) 59, Central Policy Files, 1967–69, Box 2125.

⁴ Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Undated. NARA, NPMP, National Security Council (NSC) Files, Country Files—Europe, Box 684.

⁵ Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger, September 3, 1970. Subject: Your meeting with Rainer Barzel. NARA, NPMP, NSC Files, Country Files—Europe, Box 684.

⁶ Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, May 29, 1971. NARA, NPMP, White House Tapes, Conversation 507–4.

⁷ Rainer Barzel, *Im Streit und umstritten. Anmerkungen zu Adenauer, Erhard und den Ostverträgen* (Frankfurt/Berlin, 1986), 172.

⁸ See e.g.: American Embassy Bonn to Secretary of State. June 2, 1970. Subject: CDU Efforts to Unseat Brandt Government and Block Eastern Policy. NARA, NPMP, NSC Files, Country Files – Europe, Box 684.

⁹ Kurt Birrenbach, *Meine Sondermissionen. Rückblick auf zwei Jahrzehnte bundesdeutscher Außenpolitik* (Düsseldorf/Wien, 1984), 336–7.

¹⁰ U.S. Mission Berlin to Secretary of State. February 14, 1972. Subject: Ambassador's Farewell Call on CDU Leader Barzel. NARA, RG 59, Lot 74 D 430, Records of Kenneth Rush, Box 13. The CDU leader named Manfred Wörner as Defense Minister, Gerhard Schröder as Minister for Foreign Affairs, and proposed split Ministries of Economic and Finance, to be headed by the CSU (Franz-Josef Strauss) and CDU (presumably Kurt Birrenbach) respectively.

¹¹ *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (AAPD) 1969, [Files on the Foreign Policy of the Federal Republic of Germany]*, eds. Hans-Peter Schwarz et al. (München, 2000), Vol. II, 1384 (Notes from Egon Bahr from December 8, 1969 on the meeting between Brandt and Rogers on December 6). See also the remarks of James S. Sutterlin, Director of the Office of German Affairs in the Department of State, from February 16, 1970: *AAPD 1970* (München, 2001), Vol. I, 264–5 (Notes from German Ambassador to the U.S., Rolf Pauls, of February 17, 1970, on meeting with Elliot Richardson and John Sutterlin on February 16).

¹² Cf. *AAPD 1969*, Vol. II, 1338–41 (Notes from Ministerialdirektor Ruete from November 27, 1969 on conversation with Fessenden on November 26); *AAPD 1969*, Vol. II, 1347–48 (Notes of Egon Bahr from November 28, 1969 on conversation with Fessenden); *AAPD 1970*, Vol. III, 2293–95 (Notes from Rolf Pauls of December 18, 1970 on conversation with Henry Kissinger on December 17, regarding remarks by Dean Acheson 'to slow down the mad race to Moscow' after the latter's meeting with President Nixon); *AAPD 1970*, Vol. III, 2305–06 (Notes from Pauls of December 22, 1970 on the meeting of Minister of State, Horst Ehmke, with Henry Kissinger on 21 December), see also: Horst Ehmke, *Mittendrin. Von der Großen Koalition zur deutschen Einheit* (Reinbek, 1996), 140–41.

¹³ NSC, NSDM 91, Subject: United States Policy on Germany and Berlin, November 6, 1970. NARA, NPMP, NSC Files, Country Files—Europe, Box 685.

¹⁴ See the records of conversation between Nixon and Brandt from December 28 and 29, 1971 in *AAPD 1971*, Vol. III, 1980–97, 2008–19. See for quotations on the subject of Eastern treaties: 1989, 2013–14.

¹⁵ Note from Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, April 28, 1972. NARA, RG 59, Central Files, POL15, GER W.

¹⁶ Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger, February 16, 1970. NARA, NPMP, NSC Files, Country Files—Europe, Box 683.

¹⁷ Memorandum of conversation. Rainer Barzel, Ambassador Rush, Jonathan Dean, April 18, 1971. NARA, RG 59, Lot 74 D 430, Box 13.

¹⁸ Record of conversation between State Secretary Paul Frank and Under Secretary of State John Irwin in Washington on November 30, 1971. *AAPD 1971* (München, 2002), Vol. III, 1861.

¹⁹ Note from Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, February 26, 1971. NARA, NPMP, NSC Files, Henry A. Kissinger (HAK) Office Files, Box 60.

²⁰ Barzel, *Im Streit und umstritten*, p. 173. See also: Rainer Barzel, *Ein gewagtes Leben. Erinnerungen* Stuttgart/Leipzig, 2001); Rainer Barzel, *Auf dem Drahtseil* (München, 1978).

²¹ American Embassy Bonn to Secretary of State. October 12, 1969. Subject: CDU Leader Barzel on Future Political Situation. NARA, Record Group (RG) 59, Central Policy Files, 1967–69, Box 2125. For details on the CDU/CSU Bundestag faction and *Ostpolitik* in the 1960s and 1970s, see Daniela Taschler, *Vor neuen Herausforderungen. Die außen- und deutschlandpolitische Debatte in der CDU/CSU-Bundestagsfraktion während der Großen Koalition (1966–1969)* (Düsseldorf, 2001); Anselm Tiggemann, *CDU/CSU und die Ost- und Deutschlandpolitik 1969–1972: Zur "Innenpolitik der Außenpolitik" der ersten Regierung Brandt/Scheel* (Frankfurt, 1998); Michael Lemke, *CDU/CSU und Vertragspolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in den Jahren 1969–1975: Kontinuität und Wandel christdemokratischer Ost- und Deutschlandpolitik* (Saarbrücken, 1992); Clay Clemens, *Reluctant Realists: The CDU/CSU and West German Ostpolitik* (Durham, 1989). See also a reflective review essay: Noel D. Cary, "Reassessing Germany's Ostpolitik. Part 1: From Détente to Refreeze," in *Central European History*, 33 (2/2000): 235–262.

²² American Embassy Bonn to Secretary of State. April 24, 1972. Subject: CDU Decides to Attempt to Unseat Brandt Government. NARA, NPMP, NSC Files, 1969–1974, Country Files—Europe, Box 686.

²³ American Consul Düsseldorf to Department of State, December 15, 1972. Subject: NRW Opposition Leader Koeppler Comments on Election Results and CDU Future. NARA, RG 59, Central Files, POL 12–6, GER W.

²⁴ Interview with Rainer Barzel. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 166 (July 20/21, 2002), Weekend Section, VIII.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Of a conversation with CSU Chairman Strauss on June 26, 1970, U.S. Embassy Officer John Dean reported that Strauss was very frank. "He realized his only real chance to become Chancellor of Germany was in the event of a severe national crisis. 'Sometimes I say to myself,' he said, 'that I do not wish myself on Germany as its Chancellor, because I know what that would mean in terms of the situation for the whole country which would have resulted in this outcome.' 'Nevertheless,' he said, 'the CSU is the most homogenous group in the entire German political system and I am fully in charge of it. No CDU leader can be named Chancellor candidate without my approval. I am the kingmaker of the CDU and cannot be deprived of this role except in the very unlikely event of a split in the party and the coalition between the left wing and the SPD.'" Memorandum of Conversation Strauss-Dean. June 26, 1970. Subject: German Political Situation. NARA, RG 59, Lot Files 74 D430, Records of Kenneth Rush, Box 13.

²⁷ American Embassy Bonn to Department of State. Subject: The CDU's Increasing Militancy. March 26, 1970. NARA, RG 59, Central Files, POL 12 GER W.

²⁸ Martin J. Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time. Memoirs of a Diplomat* (Athens, 1998), 303–04.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 319.

³⁰ To this day, Rainer Barzel feels bitter about both Helmut Kohl and Franz Josef Strauss in particular, albeit for different reasons. See the 2002 interview with the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* quoted above, headlined "Rainer Barzel about Treason." See also his three memoir books cited above.

³¹ Cf. Barzel's claim to the U.S. Embassy that he criticized exclusively the Brandt government, but not the Allies, for certain aspects of the Berlin Agreement, although this was distorting the real responsibilities. American Embassy to Secretary of State, August 24, 1971. Subject: Berlin Talks—Initial CDU Reactions to Berlin Agreement. NARA, RG 59, Lot Files 74 D430, Records of Kenneth Rush, Box 12.

³² American Embassy Bonn to Secretary of State, June 1, 1972. Subject: Intentions of CDU Leader Barzel. NARA, NPMP, NSC Files, Country Files—Europe, Box 687.

³³ American Embassy Bonn to Secretary of State, January 15, 1972. Subject: Barzel Visit to the U.S.—Suggested Topics for Discussion. NARA, RG 59, Lot 74 D 430, Records of Kenneth Rush, Box 13.