

related accounts by Kohl's aide, Horst Teltschik, and Gorbachev's aide, Andrei Grachev, indicate that Kohl's speech was based in large part directly on secret messages from Moscow. Remarkably, these messages were apparently unbeknownst to Gorbachev.

This revisionist history of the *10 Points* hinges on back-channel communications with Soviet Central Committee expert Valentin Falin, who was head of the International Department and former Soviet ambassador to West Germany in the 1970s. His conduit to the west was long-time Soviet interlocutor Nikolai Portugalov, who spoke to Horst Teltschik on November 21st, 1989 about the idea of a confederation between East and West Germany.

According to Grachev, Falin's rivalry with top Gorbachev assistant Anatoly Chernyaev had prevented Falin from getting his ideas to Gorbachev directly. So he decided to use a long-standing confidential channel through Portugalov to Teltschik, anticipating that Teltschik would then persuade Kohl to call Gorbachev and discuss the idea of a confederation in a "common European home". *Deutschlandspiel* shows that Falin drafted two position papers, an official one, cleared with Chernyaev, and an unofficial one which declared that the idea of a confederation was something the Soviets were already discussing at the level of the *Politbüro* and were prepared to accept in principle.

In Horst Teltschik's memorandum to Chancellor Kohl, he confirms that the *10 Points* did not disagree with the Soviet proposals presented to him through the confidential channel, but rather was based on those positions, which he attached to his memo. No other copy of this memo is known to exist. Apparently, the reason Teltschik wrote his memorandum to Kohl on December 6th is that the Germans were perplexed by the vehemently negative Soviet reaction to the *10 Points*.

Kohl and his aides initially thought the messages were coming from Gorbachev himself and that Kohl needed to go public quickly just to keep pace and eventually regain the initiative. At this point, no one knew of Falin's role in originating the Soviet messages. Kohl's bold yet partly misinformed action set the stage for making the idea of a confederation the center of the German unification discourse. And the rest is history.



THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Friday Film Fest Series



Deutschlandspiel - Part 2: Eilig Vaterland!

By Hans Christoph Blumenberg

October 23rd, 2015

• 6:30 PM •

Film, Food & Discussion

Non-Members \$15, Members \$12

The German Society of PA

611 Spring Garden St.

215-627-2332

Support provided in part by the
Philadelphia Cultural Fund.



Detuschlandspiel - Part 2: Eilig Vaterland! (2000)

Credits:

Director: Hans Christoph Blumenberg
Production: Ulrich Lenze
Editor: Guido Knopp + Team
Camera: Hartmut E. Lange
Year: 2000
Length: 89 Minutes
Commentary: Karl Moehlmann



Cast:

Igor Maximytschew: Peter Ustinov
Margot Honecker: Ilse Zilstorff
Fritz Streletz: Hans-Michael Rehberg
François Mitterrand: Jean-François Balmer
Wjatscheslaw Kotschemassow: Peter Fritz
Erich Mielke: Peter Sodann
Aram Radomski: Fabian Busch
Roland Wötzel: Jaeki Schwarz
Viktoria Herrmann: Stefanie Stappenbeck
Fernsehredakteur Seidel: Gustav-Peter Wöhler
Günter Schabowski: Bernd Stegemann
Helmut Hackenberg: Günter Junghans
Helmut Kohl: Lambert Hamel
Kurt Masur: Andreas Schmidt-Schaller
George H.W. Bush: Edgar M. Böhlke

Condoleezza Rice: Sheri Hagen
Marschall Sergej Achromejew: Michael Mendl
General Gregorjewitsch: Walter Gontermann
Anatoli Tschernjajew: Elert Bode
Erich Honecker: Rudolf Wessely
Michail Gorbatschow: Udo Samel
Egon Krenz: Rudolf Kowalski
Walentin Falin: Ezard Haubmann
Margaret Thatcher: Nicole Heesters
Harry Tisch: Jürgen Holtz
Siegbert Schefke: Arnd Klawitter
Jan Carpentier: Tobias Langhoff
Horst Teltschik: Udo Schenk
Hans Modrow: Hermann Beyer
Nikolai Portugalow: Matthias Fuchs

I. Deutschlandspiel

Deutschlandspiel is a made for television movie in two parts. Released in 2000, it tells the story of the peaceful revolution in East Germany and the subsequent German unification. Each part lasts 89 minutes, thus neatly corresponding to the year 1989 in which the wall fell. Tonight, we are presenting the segment concerning German unification. Aided by a political climate of détente and disarmament, the peaceful revolution of 1989 triggered the events which led to German unification in 1990, an outcome previously considered impossible by all knowledgeable observers.

The movie effectively combines archival footage, reenactments and interviews. This synergy of documentary and drama yields a compelling view of the unfolding events. The interviews in particular (with key players including government officials, politicians, soviet diplomats, television journalists and hobby-film activists from East Germany) demonstrate how the perception of events differed among individuals as well as groups.

II. Kohl's 10 Punkte

Three weeks after the stunning opening of the wall (November 28th, 1989) Helmut Kohl delivered his famous ten point speech for German Unity in front of the German Bundestag in Bonn. Kohl had been advised by his close aides that this topic would be an appropriate way to overcome his low standings in the national polls. Neither his coalition partner (the FDP), nor Secretary of State Hans Dietrich Genscher, nor the western allies were consulted prior to the speech.

In fact, Kohl's letter to George H. W. Bush arrived at the White House at the very moment that Kohl made his speech. He proposed a multi-step plan for unification with a democratizing German Democratic Republic. The first step was closer cooperation between the two German states. This would be followed by the formation of a confederation and finally by the establishment of a federation that was compatible with East-West détente and European integration. "No one knows what a reunified Germany will ultimately look like. That unity will come, however, when the people in Germany want it – of this, I am certain."

The reaction in most capitals was essentially negative. Mitterand and Thatcher were upset that they were not informed about Kohl's plan for German unity. The idea of a unified Germany with seventeen million additional people and an even more dominant economy in Western Europe evoked old fears of German aspirations for superpower status. Of these two Western leaders, Margret Thatcher seemed much more candid in her total opposition to German unification. Washington was "surprised, but not too worried because Kohl couldn't pursue reunification on his own", according to Brent Scowcroft, Bush's National Security advisor.

The Soviet Foreign Ministry denounced Kohl's action as pushing change in a "nationalistic direction" and Gorbachev himself told President Bush at the Malta Summit in December 1989 that Kohl "does not act seriously and responsibly". In hindsight, there is no doubt that Kohl's speech was the pivotal moment in the history of the German unification process.

The speech also catapulted Kohl to the forefront of events in East Germany, whose regime was rapidly collapsing. It helped him to channel and mold the calls and energy of the street demonstrations in East Germany ("*Wir sind ein Volk*") into the implementation of the first free election in East Germany in March of 1990. This election then led to the steps for monetary (*Währungsunion*) and political unity between East and West Germany. But his famous speech also put both the Western allies and the Soviet Union into a situation where they lagged behind rather than steered the extraordinary developments of 1989 and 1990.

New Documents

What seemed like a "go it alone" strategy by Helmut Kohl (thus creating an image of himself as a visionary leader and the "father" of German unification) has been undermined by documents which became available to Blumenberg when he made this movie. More recently, web postings by the National Security Archive and published for the first time in the Archive's book "Masterpieces of History" as well as