

CREATING A CDU/CSU PUBLIC RELATIONS MACHINE: THE 1953 BUNDESTAG ELECTION



A number of historians of the Federal Republic's party system have identified the 1953 Bundestag election as a "critical election" in the development of the West German political system. This is undoubtedly valid from the perspective of how the major parties fared at the polls. These historians note that the Federal Republic's party system was fully established by the 1953 election with the major parties of the CDU/CSU, SPD, and FDP coming to the fore. When West Germans went to the polls on 6 September, these three parties collected 83.5 percent of the vote compared to 72.1 percent just four years earlier. The CDU/CSU and the SPD alone captured 74 percent of the vote compared to 60.2 in 1949 (the CDU/CSU was up to 45.2 percent from 31 percent, and the SPD declined slightly to 28.8 percent from 29.2 percent). In addition, a total of six parties gained seats in the 1953 Bundestag compared to eleven in 1949 as many of the small bourgeois parties had declined in strength. From the perspective of the number of viable parties, the 1949 election was, like Weimar elections, characterized by numerous splinter parties, while the 1953 election ushered in a party system (developed further in the 1960s) in which the larger parties of the CDU/CSU and SPD struggled against each other and the FDP acted as a crucial linchpin in the formation of coalition governments.¹

The 1953 Bundestag campaign also represented an important transition in the West German political culture. In many of the technical aspects and its tone, the campaign were similar to the 1949 campaign, but it clearly showed the beginnings of an evolution of politics based increasingly upon image, mood, and par-

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ticular issues instead of clearly articulated ideological positions. In regard to both technical aspects, including the use of new opinion polling and advertising techniques, and substantive aspects, such as an increased emphasis on the party's image, the 1953 campaign was an important step in the Americanization of the West German political culture—a process that would intensify in the 1957 campaign. By 1953 much of the old ideological strife focused on differences between rigid party programs meant to appeal to the parties' bases, which had prevailed in the 1949 election and Weimar elections, was beginning to fade. To be sure, the tone of the election still echoed Weimar elections, particularly with partisan defamation of the opposition, not least by Adenauer himself. But Bundestag elections were now becoming more like referenda on the personalities running for chancellor.² As the party that was truly driving this transformation forward, the CDU/CSU had begun to develop a party image based in large part on Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. In conjunction with the focus on party personalities, the 1953 campaign reflected an emerging transformation in the tools of political communication. Spurred on by a resurgent SPD, the CDU/CSU developed new methods for understanding and connecting with the electorate. The media of the Weimar and 1949 elections—the speech, the leaflet, and the poster—were being supplemented and updated by the infusion of new public opinion polling and advertising techniques. The application of these new techniques ushered in what could be called the “consumerization” of West Germany's political culture. In hopes of reaching a broader constituency, the CDU/CSU's campaigns increasingly sold its image by carefully tracking and catering to the views and opinions of the electorate, rather than barraging the voters with the party's ideology itself. With the threat of an SPD victory looming, the CDU/CSU developed a whole network of public relations institutions at its direct disposal, or working on its behalf, to influence public opinion. Ironically, it was the 77-year-old Adenauer who encouraged his conservative party to campaign in an innovative style that borrowed heavily from the United States. At the same time the SPD remained stagnant in its approach to electoral campaigning and accordingly began to lag behind the CDU/CSU at the ballot box.

The 1953 Bundestag election did not hinge upon the issue of economics, as had the 1949 campaign with its theme of *Markt oder Plan*. Instead geopolitical issues, such as the threat of communism, Adenauer's policy of aligning the Federal Republic with the West, the question of West German rearmament, and German unification emerged as the main focal points of the campaign. The CDU/CSU cultivated and capitalized on the public's faith in Adenauer to orchestrate West German diplomacy and to establish the nation as a respected member of the international community. Even in light of Adenauer's longer-term diplomatic policies, events in East Germany in the summer before the election most substantially set the tone for campaign. On 17 June, only eight weeks before the election, worker protests demanding greater availability of consumer goods erupted in East Berlin and spread throughout East Germany to some 270 villages and cities, involving upward of 400,000 protesters. By that evening Soviet troops had been

called out to crush the protests. This particular episode illustrated starkly to the electorate what appeared to be the imminent Soviet threat not only to German unity but to the West German state itself. Further evidence of the Soviet regime's brutality was its refusal to accept foodstuffs as humanitarian aid offered to East Germans by the American and West German governments in late July. Within this context of Cold War tensions, Adenauer's quest for close cooperation with the West and especially the United States was continually highlighted throughout the campaign—starting with Adenauer's visit to the United States in April 1953 and culminating in Secretary of State John Foster Dulles's comment, three days before the election on 3 September, that the defeat of Adenauer's government would jeopardize prospects for German unification.

After the election, the CDU/CSU clearly acknowledged that the key factors in the party's success were Adenauer's foreign policy and leadership within the context of the increased public goodwill toward the government resulting from West Germany's economic resurgence.³ Given the importance of foreign policy in the campaign, economic reconstruction proved an adaptable political tool. The CDU/CSU shaped the meaning of the social market economy and the burgeoning economic miracle to demonstrate the party's achievements within the context of heightened tensions between the two Germanys. In contrast, the party depicted the controlled economy in East Germany as a natural outgrowth of Marxist ideology. With this stance, the CDU/CSU portrayed the SPD as a danger to West German security—both from within and from without. The CDU/CSU campaign centered increasingly upon its concrete political, diplomatic, and economic accomplishments, as opposed to any ideological program. Clearly subdued in its propaganda were the Christian roots of the party—an issue that had played more prominently in its antimaterialist position in 1949. Instead of stressing that the social market economy allowed the creation of an organic, Christian society, the CDU/CSU began to talk more explicitly about how its economic policy enabled consumerism to grow in the "*Wirtschaftswunderland*" of West Germany. With its new approach to campaigning, the 1953 election reflected the CDU/CSU's ability to transcend programmatic politics and create an ever developing image of itself that appealed across sociological and economic divisions in West German society. Clearly, in this election the CDU/CSU had acquired the tools to understand and reach the broadest constituencies, thereby enabling it to emerge as a *Volkspartei*.

After the 1949 election and particularly during the Korean War with its accompanying rise in prices, the CDU/CSU found itself lagging behind the SPD in the opinion polls. From late 1950 through early 1953, the SPD continually held an advantage over the CDU/CSU of between 15 and 3 percentage points, with an average lead of about 9 points.⁴ Public opinion polling showed at the time that the CDU/CSU's popularity fluctuated in conjunction with the public's confidence in the economy—a point not lost on Adenauer.⁵ The SPD performed well in the elections on the *Land* (state) level. In each of the Landtag elections held between the 1949 and 1953 Bundestag elections, the CDU/CSU lost ground in its

overall percentage of the vote, with the SPD vote increasing in all of the states except Schleswig-Holstein. Clearly, by 1953 the SPD was threatening the CDU/CSU's position as the coalition-building party in the government.⁶

It was within this context of the growing SPD challenge that the CDU/CSU-led government erected a network of institutions to influence and shape public opinion. Outside of governmental organizations, industry reacted quickly to the drop in confidence in the social market economy and the Adenauer government by creating its own public relations campaigns—most notably the activities of De Waage. The government's most important effort to shape public opinion was the establishment of the Bundespresse- und Informationsamt (Federal Press and Information Agency). The founding of the Federal Press Agency began in October 1949 when Herbert Blankenhorn, Adenauer's personal advisor and the general secretary of the CDU in the British Zone, explained to Federal Finance Minister Fritz Schäffer that such a body was essential to governmental activities.⁷ Adenauer commented that the organization would be necessary "to develop a good relationship with newspapers and journalists."⁸ The Federal Press Agency was soon established, although it consisted at first of only one man, Heinrich Böx, who acted as the *Bundespressechef* (federal press officer). Despite its modest beginnings, the Federal Press Agency became an important tool for the chancellor because until 1958 it functioned as part of the Chancellery, and therefore acted directly under the chancellor's orders and in his interests.⁹

The Federal Press Agency performed what has been described as "*Hörrohr- und Sprachrohrfunktion*" (ear horn and megaphone functions) for the government, one of its chief tasks being to gather information from leading international newspapers and magazines, along with almost all of the German-speaking media. The agency made this information available to the chancellor, ministers, state secretaries, and other high government officials through short reports called "*Nachrichtenspiegel*" (mirror of news reports). In many ways, in fact, the agency's "*Sprachrohr*" function was a secondary one, especially during its first years. The most important ongoing function was the government's official information sheet, "*Bulletin*," which was distributed to journalists and provided updates on the government's activities.¹⁰

Despite its one-man beginnings, the Federal Press Agency grew quickly during the early 1950s, and its reach lengthened noticeably as the 1953 Bundestag elections approached. In these first years, the Federal Press Agency experienced a quick succession of leadership as Adenauer searched for what he unfortunately termed "a democratic Goebbels"—an indication that he had not yet completely comprehended the fundamental transformation of public relations that was currently underway in West Germany.¹¹ It was not until January 1952 that the government named a permanent head of the Federal Press Agency: Felix von Eckardt, a relatively unknown figure among journalists in Bonn. The organization's funding grew quickly through the 1950s. In the fiscal year 1949/50, the agency had a planned budget of DM 450,000. This expanded to about DM 12.5 million by the fiscal year 1956/57.¹² During the 1950s the Federal Press Agency also grew quickly in

size. In October 1951 the Federal Press Agency employed a staff of 22, which by February 1957 had swelled to 419.¹³ With the increased funding and manpower, the Federal Press Agency's influence grew apace through the 1950s as it conducted a variety of public relations campaigns on behalf of the chancellor's government.

One of the challenges of the Federal Press Agency's "*Sprachrohr*" functions was to generate public relations materials for the government that the public would deem creditable. Aware of the public's distrust of official governmental announcements after the experiences of the Third Reich, the Federal Press Agency very seldom issued propaganda directly for the government. Instead, the Federal Press Agency constructed a number of "camouflaged" organizations so that the propaganda produced by these organizations, be it brochures, leaflets, information bulletins, films, or posters, would not be obviously linked to the government. These organizations, including groups producing propaganda on issues such as European integration, NATO membership, and West German rearmament, comprised a wide variety of agencies at the government's disposal to manufacture support for its policies. The most important of these organizations in terms of West German politics was the Arbeitsgemeinschaft demokratischen Kreise (Working Group of Democratic Circles, ADK).¹⁴

Adenauer's state secretary in the Chancellery, Otto Lenz, named to the post by Federal President Theodor Heuss on 29 March 1951, sat at the center of this web of propaganda activities on the government's behalf. Born in 1903 in Wetzlar, Lenz was trained as a lawyer and had been an active member of the Center Party from the 1920s until its dissolution by the Nazis in 1933. In October 1944 he was arrested by the Gestapo and sentenced to four years in prison because of his association with some Catholic opponents to the Nazi regime. As one of Adenauer's closest advisors on domestic politics, Lenz counted among his responsibilities the major task of expanding the government's press and propaganda activities, creating what Adenauer described as "propaganda with popular appeal" and coordinating the propaganda activities of the Federal Press Agency and the CDU/CSU. In many respects, he functioned as the public relations manager of Adenauer's government. Clearly, Adenauer's choice of Lenz signaled his wholehearted acceptance of an American-style approach to campaigning and public relations.

Lenz maintained close contacts with Erich Peter Neumann of the Institut für Demoskopie and was instrumental in promoting the use of public opinion surveys within the government and the CDU/CSU.¹⁵ In addition, he played the decisive role in the transformation of the government's and CDU/CSU's propaganda. As early as August 1952, he was warning Adenauer that the party's propaganda was deficient and advocating a fundamental reconceptualization of the CDU/CSU's preparations for the 1953 Bundestag election. Although the CDU/CSU should continue to develop a platform (*Wahlprogramm*) disseminated through the press, the party should begin to concentrate upon "mass propaganda" featuring attention-grabbing slogans that stuck with people and proved convincing. To reach the broadest masses, Lenz explained, propaganda must appeal to the emotions—as statistics from psychology had recently documented. As part of

such an approach, the CDU/CSU should emphasize its personalities—including Economics Minister Erhard.¹⁶ Throughout 1951 he had already underscored that the government must not merely rely on the press to influence public opinion, but rather must utilize what he termed “modern methods.”¹⁷ Clearly, Lenz’s modeled his public relations on American methods. He clearly expressed his support of this philosophy in a November 1951 letter to Frau Dr. Heilmann, the head of the Gesellschaft für Auslandskunde, an organization founded in 1948 whose goal was to create contacts between West Germans and foreigners with similar interests. That summer Heilmann had visited the United States to study American public relations techniques and had established contacts with public relations experts and scholars. To draw upon Heilmann’s expertise, Lenz requested a detailed letter from her on how Americans conducted public relations, commenting that “I would really like to organize something similar in Germany.”¹⁸

As part of Lenz’s drive to transform the CDU/CSU’s electoral practices, a process clearly revealed in the 1953 campaign, public opinion polling assumed an increasingly important role. Overall, by the early 1950s, such polling had made serious inroads into West German politics; in fact, various groups were employing public opinion polling as early as 1948. In that year Ludwig Erhard, as head of the Economics Administration of the Bizone, had commissioned surveys from the Institut für Demoskopie to get a sense of the public’s reaction to the currency reform.¹⁹ The FDP, in preparation for the 1950 state elections in North Rhine–Westphalia, was the first political party to commission polling surveys.²⁰ Die Waage’s exploitation of public opinion polling on a massive scale to track sociopolitical views and the effectiveness of their advertisements constituted a major innovation in the implementation of public opinion surveys. In the ensuing years, the CDU/CSU was the foremost political party in the scope of its use of public opinion surveys and thereby contributed significantly to the transformation of the West German political culture. As these methods took hold, parties were less and less inclined to plumb the opinions of the amorphous masses in an unsystematic or haphazard manner. Instead, armed with polling statistics, parties could now differentiate specific segments of the electorate and appeal to them with greater precision. Political advertising became less focused upon the party itself and its ideology, and more on the views and predilections of the targeted groups of voters. In many respects, this change was analogous to the way commercial advertising was transformed from the 1920s through the 1950s from a producer- to a more consumer-centered perspective.

Modern political polling developed in the 1930s in the United States when such pioneers as George Gallup, Elmo Roper, and Archibald Crossley began to conduct “scientific” polls tracking presidential elections. During the late 1930s and 1940s American political parties, interest groups, and candidates quickly accepted polling and incorporated it into their campaigns. But faith in the pollsters faltered with the 1948 presidential election, when polls predicted Thomas Dewey would defeat the incumbent Harry Truman. The problem lay in their use of the “survey” method, which polled a cross section of the larger population, but left

each individual interviewer to decide whom to poll. As a result, those who were easily accessible were more likely to be interviewed, thereby skewing the sample. Very quickly polling groups took up the random polling method, which also interviewed a cross section of the population but ensured that this group was randomly selected, thereby enhancing its reliability.²¹

In contrast to the United States, in Germany polling research was practically unknown prior to the Second World War. Yet before and during the war the Nazi regime was interested in gathering information on public opinion. One of the regime's most ambitious efforts was led by SS Colonel Otto Ohlendorf and the internal ideological security arm of the party and state, the Sicherheitsdienst (security service, SD). To evaluate the effectiveness of Nazi propaganda and strengthen the regime's hold on power, the SD utilized a network of secret interrogators to gather information on Germans' opinions on the Nazi Party and morale in regard to the war. In the course of these investigations, which clearly were not grounded in social scientific methods, the interrogators talked to ordinary Germans in trains and other public places in order to sound out German public opinion.²²

As part of its democratization efforts after the war, the American occupation government established the Opinion Survey Section, which carried out seventy-two surveys between October 1945 and September 1949 testing German opinions on the economy, politics, and the recent past. Meanwhile, once the war was over, a number of West German polling institutes were established. In 1945 Karl-Georg Stackelberg set up the EMNID Institut in Bielefeld (Ermittlungen, Meinungen, Nachrichten, Information, Dienste; Ascertainment, Opinion, Communication, Information, Services), followed by Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and her Institut für Demoskopie in Allensbach am Bodensee, which began conducting surveys for the French in 1946 and was incorporated in 1948. The Institut für Demoskopie served as an important conduit of American polling techniques to West Germany, for Noelle-Neumann had studied journalism in the 1930s at the University of Missouri, where she learned about the work of early pollsters such as George Gallup and Elmo Roper.²³

West German political leaders took immediate notice of these homegrown institutes. The government along with the CDU/CSU began utilizing polling surveys in early 1951 in order to monitor the pulse of West German public opinion and learn how to "sell" its policies more effectively. Since the Institut für Demoskopie was not just involved in tracking West German opinion in regard to politics but also conducted consumer research, the Institut quite naturally facilitated the transfer of commercial advertising practices into the political realm. According to one estimate, out of the 131 Institut-conducted surveys in 1952, 34 dealt with politics, 32 with market research, and 30 with radio listener research.²⁴ Erich Peter Neumann, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's husband, director of the Institut für Demoskopie, and a CDU member of the Bundestag between 1961 and 1965, had indicated to Chancellor Adenauer in September 1949 that the Institut could "provide political information with the help of modern, reliable psychological methods, which could not be obtained in any other way." Indeed, Neumann vol-

unteered to make a presentation explaining the usefulness of public opinion surveys.²⁵ Although Adenauer did not accept the offer, the Chancellery's reply to Neumann indicated that the chancellor "hoped to have the opportunity for such a presentation at a later time."²⁶

Clearly, Erich Peter Neumann accorded public opinion polling an essential role in establishing a West German democracy in light of Germany's recent past—especially the failure of the Weimar Republic and the rise of the Nazis. In December 1951 Neumann addressed a convention of West Germany's leading public opinion polling experts. He underscored the impact that polling could have upon the future of the West German democracy. Speculating about what might have been in the midst of German democracy's darkest hour in the early 1930s, he asked his audience, "Had the Reichsgovernment been well informed that a great danger was at the door, would it have been able to stop this development, and what could it have done?"²⁷ Neumann emphatically believed that the Reichsgovernment, if armed with the appropriate information, could have stemmed the Nazi tide and rescued the Weimar democracy. The parallel he drew to the present situation was doubtlessly clear to the conservative members of the audience, who in the context of the Cold War would have regarded the SPD as a potential threat to the West German democracy. The key, from Neumann's perspective, was that the government must acquire the right information to know and direct public opinion.

In 1963 Noelle-Neumann and Gerhard Schmidtchen, a sociologist who had worked at the Institut für Demoskopie, published an essay entitled "The Significance of Representative Public Opinion Polling in an Open Society"—an essay that explored the issues of polling in a democracy. Much of their article focused on defending polling against charges that it cheapened politics by forcing politicians to say and do only what the public demanded—thereby subordinating solid policy to political expediency. Polling data, they argued, could inform politicians who needed to do a better job communicating with the public and convincing it that their policies were the best options. In an era of "psychological democratization, in which the broad social classes long for a sense of worth," they explained, bureaucratic statistics, personal reports on the public mood, and the secret service (*Geheimdienst*) were no longer sufficient to guide political parties and governments. Their essay echoed the speech of Noelle-Neumann's husband by evoking the breakdown of the Weimar Republic. This failure of democracy in Germany would not be repeated, they contended, if a determined political leadership continually observed the ongoing political-psychological situation.

The assumption in Schmidtchen's, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's, and her husband's views, is that the broad social classes are fundamentally a dangerous force whose irrationality needs to be understood if they are to be controlled. In this view, the essential danger in the early 1930s was not the Nazis themselves, but the fact that the population believed in and supported the Nazis. In other words, these experts defended the use of surveys as a scientific and empirical means of understanding the fundamental irrationality of the electorate and removing what

they called the randomness of social speculation in the political decision making process. As Noelle-Neumann and Schmidtchen put it: "In a nation in which continuous political surveys are done, there will be no more latent trends. Potentially radical trends in the population of the German Federal Republic will be constantly controlled." Scientifically based research would enable the political leadership to deal with new social problems emerging in a dynamic society and "to realize progress without paralyzing social conflict, without coups and revolutions."

Ultimately, Schmidtchen and Noelle-Neumann's vision was very much a top-down view of democracy. Surveys would have a pedagogical value for the political leadership in determining how to direct society in a democracy and in creating a "reservoir of energy for democracy" by "providing the public spirit [*Gemeinsinn*] of the people with convincing political themes." Schmidtchen and Noelle-Neumann were critical of the classical Enlightenment conception of a rational, open society. They concluded that "[w]e know today, that the electorate does not possess the rational qualities, which according to classical democratic theories it must provide."²⁸ It would be political leadership, armed with scientific knowledge derived from public opinion surveys, that would supply those essential rational qualities. Overall, these polling experts were redefining public opinion surveys and propaganda, dissociating them from the overpowering instruments of a totalitarian regime, like the Third Reich, and repositioning them as necessary tools in a functioning democracy.

At first, Adenauer hesitated to accept public opinion polling. Upon receiving the first polling results, he reportedly commented: "This public opinion polling is the devil's work! How can it be possible to find out so precisely what people think politically, or what they think about the political parties and how they will vote. I distrust clairvoyants and people who claim they can read the future."²⁹ Yet, Adenauer eventually came to embrace public opinion polling. Throughout his chancellorship, he was constantly briefed with extensive polling data. In fact, one is struck by his deep familiarity with the information, as reflected by his comments in various minutes of party and governmental meetings, letters, and memoranda. Given his overall mistrust of the West German people because of their support of the Nazis, Konrad Adenauer found in polling the perfect tool for managing public opinion in the newly established democracy. But it was not only a method of entering into a discussion with the West German people. In the 1949 campaign, Adenauer and other party leaders urged that the CDU/CSU propaganda appeal to the "primitive levels of society" and present simple ideas requiring little thought. Clearly, Adenauer did not hold the electorate's intellectual abilities and rationality in high regard. Public opinion polling offered a reputedly empirical and scientific method to tap into the sentiments of the amorphous, irrational, and potentially dangerous masses. Accordingly, the new techniques described by members of the *Institut für Demoskopie* jibed very well with Adenauer's assumptions on politics and views of the German people. Adenauer, the CDU/CSU, and economic leaders alike viewed polling as means not only of tracking public opinion but directing it, obtaining power, and holding onto that power.

Through the spring of 1950, Neumann continued to approach Adenauer about the possibility of the Institut für Demoskopie's working on behalf of the government of the Federal Republic of Germany. He suggested that every month the institute deliver two information reports on the development of public opinion in the Federal Republic at a cost of DM 2,000 per month.³⁰ By July 1950, the Federal Press Agency had already commissioned the Institut für Demoskopie to conduct a survey costing DM 5,000, although as yet there was no formal contract for establishing an ongoing relationship. In November 1950 Dr. Heinrich Brand, an official within the Chancellery, indicated in his notes that Adenauer wanted to test public opinion regarding the issue of an eventual West German contingent within a European army.³¹ Brand suggested that both the Institut für Demoskopie and the EMNID Institut, a larger and at that time a more established polling group based in Bielefeld, be put under contract for a testing extending from 1 November 1950 to 28 February 1951.³² The relationship with the Institut für Demoskopie and EMNID continued through the 1950s, with the amount spent on both institutes' surveys continually increasing. A March 1957 report indicated that a yearly budget of DM 150,000 was available for public opinion surveys, with DM 49,000 going to EMNID and DM 90,000 to the Institut für Demoskopie. Overall, the government and the CDU/CSU accumulated a vast and detailed body of information on public opinion covering an array of topics.³³

Utilizing knowledge acquired from the polls, the government and the Federal Press Agency set about influencing and directing public opinion through their network of public relations organizations. The above-mentioned Arbeitsgemeinschaft demokratischen Kreise (ADK) acted as a key organization distributing the material produced by the Federal Press Agency. Since its founding in December of 1951 the ADK had pursued its goal of developing the West Germans' belief and trust in democracy. It saw itself as the "Institute of Publicity" charged with the task of distributing of democratic information and educational works with an emphasis on the representation of domestic and foreign policies of the government and opposition according to an understanding of Anglo-Saxon public relations techniques³⁴

The head of the ADK, Hans Edgar Jahn, has explained that one challenge confronting politics in West Germany was overcoming the "*ohne mich*" (without me) attitude among its citizens. This "*ohne mich*" sentiment was meant not just in regard to West Germans' reluctance for rearmament, but also referred to their general apathy vis-à-vis the state, political parties, and politics in general. Polling statistics clearly supported Jahn's view. A June 1952 survey indicated that only 27 percent of Germans registered interest in politics, while 41 percent responded "not particularly interested" and 32 percent "not at all interested."³⁵ Voting participation was generally high in West Germany—usually with around 80–85 percent voting in Bundestag elections—but a sense prevailed that voting constituted the citizen's sole obligation.³⁶ Jahn believed that integrating West Germans into political life would be a difficult task and that Allied methods of "reeducation" should be rejected. "The government" he argued, "must make its policies trans-

parent with the most modern methods from technology and publicity. Good policies with advantages for the population must also be sold well.”³⁷ Although it was packaged as a grass-roots organization helping develop West German civil society and democracy, in actuality the ADK functioned as one of the most important organizations promoting the policies of the Adenauer-led government, while its links to the government were deliberately kept obscured.

Clearly, Jahn and the ADK based their public relations philosophies on practices developed in the United States. The United States had been the center of modern public relations methods since the beginning of the twentieth century. With the growth of a mass, increasingly urban, industrialized society, public relations was regarded by politicians and businessmen alike as an essential means of managing an increasingly influential public opinion. In 1904 Ivy Lee, a Princeton-trained financial journalist who emerged as the leader in the field, began doing public relations work primarily for big business and industrialists—in part to help large capitalist enterprises explain and defend their interests vis-à-vis the rising challenges of working-class radicalism and middle-class, progressive muckrakers. Lee helped develop a methodology called the “two-way concept” of public relations whereby his client would listen as well as communicate information to the public. This contrasted sharply with American business’s traditionally tight-lipped stance toward the public and the press—most notably expressed by the railroad magnate Cornelius Vanderbilt’s infamous retort, “The public be damned.”

By contrast, Lee stressed building public trust by truthfully reporting the facts and maintaining an open attitude. To enhance such trust-building, Lee subsequently added another concept: convincing the public that the company was working for the public’s benefit. Yet one could never be certain just what, for Lee, constituted “truth” and “openness.” While on John D. Rockefeller Jr.’s payroll, Lee spun the so-called Ludlow Massacre of 1914, during which fourteen miners were shot down by strikebreakers acting on behalf of Rockefeller’s Colorado Iron and Fuel Company, in the most favorable light. That summer Lee released a series of bulletins that reported the facts of the strike in a most distorted and misleading fashion—suggesting that the strikers provoked violence and that one of strike supporters, Mother Jones, operated a house of prostitution.³⁸ Through the 1920s until his death in 1934, Lee continued representing big business, including efforts to improve I.G. Farben’s image in the United States in the midst of increasing Nazi aggression and anti-Semitism.³⁹

During World War I, the United States government utilized public relations to bolster support for the war, spur military recruitment, and sell war bonds. It relied heavily on the famous Committee on Public Information—known more often as the Creel Committee, after its civilian director, George Creel. Established immediately following the United States’ entry into the war, the Creel Committee exploited all forms of media—the printed word, film, posters, radio, the spoken word—to advance its efforts and produced some of the harshest propaganda of the war. Perhaps its most notable product was the wave of posters, articles, and films vilifying the Germans as “the Hun.”⁴⁰ One of the hundreds of journalists

and publicists working for the C reel Committee was Edward Bernays. Born in Vienna in 1891, Bernays—who was a nephew of Sigmund Freud—became the driving force in the development of public relations techniques in the postwar United States. Describing himself as “counsel on public relations,” Bernays combed thought from psychology, sociology, and market research and produced his seminal work, *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, in 1923.

Bernays rejected Lee’s belief in swaying the public through rational arguments and fully embraced the notion that the public opinion was driven by prejudice, emotion, and the subconscious. *Crystallizing Public Opinion* built upon and more formally developed Lee’s “two-way concept” of public relations in which the publicist enters into a discussion with the public and tries to understand it. At the same time the book explored ideas of the “herd mentality” and irrationality in public opinion—clearly drawing upon Gustave Le Bon’s analysis of the crowd. For Bernays, sound public relations required careful psychological and sociological study of the public mind. The public was not to be challenged with a direct argument, but instead must be led indirectly to a particular point of view or belief. This process was part of what Bernays termed “engineering consent”—reflecting his belief in public relations’ important social function in shaping public opinion. Public relations’ principal task, as he saw it, was not to engage a public of heterogeneous opinions with ideas, since that may spawn further debate and possible confusion. Instead, the public relations expert must attract the public with symbols and pictures that touch upon deep emotions—thereby creating a homogenous public perception of an issue, not a rational debate. Often appeals would be articulated by so-called “opinion makers,” such as doctors, sports stars, and celebrities, in whom the public could unthinkingly place its trust. Bernays was renowned for staging the “created event” that would attract media attention, thereby generating publicity and influencing people’s opinions. Perhaps the best-known of Bernays’ creations was the so-called “torches of freedom” demonstration staged on Easter Sunday in 1930 as a protest against women’s inequality. For this media event Bernays organized a group of women, many of whom were former suffragists, to march down Fifth Avenue in New York smoking cigarettes. This public flouting of the taboo against women smoking in public generated considerable media attention throughout the nation. This event, Bernays later claimed, helped break down social barriers against women smoking and increased cigarette sales. In any case, by transforming cigarettes from mere consumer products into symbols of freedom, Bernays creatively demonstrated his technique of reshaping the public’s perception of reality not through debate but through symbols and thereby changing public opinion.⁴¹

The concept of public relations, although it first spread to German industry in the prewar era, did not begin to fully pervade the Federal Republic’s political culture until after the war. In 1951 one of the trailblazers and popularizers of public relations for West Germany’s industry, Carl Hundhausen, published *Werbung um öffentlichen Vertrauen* (*Winning the Public Trust* in English translation), which served as the handbook for West Germans interested in conducting American-style pub-

lic relations. Between the wars Hundhausen had spent time in the United States, where he absorbed American public relations techniques—especially those of Bernays. Following the Second World War, he handled considerable public relations work for a variety of firms, including Krupp, and also wrote several books on the subject.⁴² His efforts familiarized a broad range of West German industrialists, journalists, advertisers, and politicians with American public relations efforts. These American public relations principles were increasingly employed to defend conservative political-economic ideologies. Die Waage's efforts to promote the social market economy clearly represented a public relations campaign based upon Lee's and Bernays' ideas. The Federal Republic's government also began to utilize such techniques. In May 1951, the ADK chief Hans Edgar Jahn made a presentation to Adenauer's state secretary, Otto Lenz, on "Democratic Information and Educational Work [*Bildungsarbeit*] on the Basis of Anglo-Saxon Public Relations Techniques"—followed up by a meeting in June in which they discussed publicity for the broad masses. Jahn then provided Lenz, at Lenz's request, with a report on American public relations techniques sometime during 1952. In fact, until 1963, Jahn would meet with the chancellor's state secretary to discuss the government's policies and their reception among the public. Jahn contended, perhaps exaggerating, that his influence upon Lenz was the key factor in the introduction of American public relations techniques into the government and the CDU/CSU.⁴³

Much of what Jahn's various books would treat as the basis of American public relations techniques harked back to Ivy Lee and his "two-way concept" of communication. Public relations materials, Jahn stressed, must address the reader as an individual rather than as part of the "masses," utilize illustrations to make publications more attractive to the reader, and take advantage of public opinion polling to initiate a "discussion" with the public—echoing some of the public relations and advertising techniques developed and implemented in the United States. Such techniques, Jahn observed, were originally employed by economic and business interests but could also be applied to the world of politics. In other words, the techniques used to sell goods could easily be transferred to sell political ideas. In the memoirs he wrote years later, Jahn argued that "[i]t is the goal of public relations to come to a common identity of common political action in accordance with the will and desire of the population. That assumes that politics is driven not according to a doctrinaire program, but instead that one shapes politics from the rich vitality of social existence."⁴⁴

In many respects Jahn's philosophy reflected the CDU/CSU's move away from a "doctrinaire program" to more modern public relations techniques that combined citizens and state institutions in a living, organic whole. Only the creation of trust and a common sense of cause between individual citizens and state, in part created by active public relations, could effect this union. Jahn placed this conception of public relations within a distinctly German context. As he explained in his 1956 analysis of public relations work in West Germany, *Lebendige Demokratie* (Living Democracy), humanity had reached a crucial point at which indi-

vidualism and freedom stood before the burgeoning threat of collectivism and tyranny. To counter the depersonalization (*Vermassung*) of society and the associated danger of collectivism, new methods of speaking to the people must be developed. The defeat of Germany in 1945 had destroyed the German people's political faith (*politische Glaube*) and now politicians must act more as psychologists or doctors than as dogmatists. To develop democratic roots where there were none, politicians had to maintain constant contact with individual people and convince them that their interests coincided with those of the larger community and political system.⁴⁵

Jahn regarded the ADK as having a crucial role in creating this organic union between citizens and state. The ADK built up its organization over the course of 1952/53. By the middle of 1952, it already had hundreds of workers throughout the Federal Republic organizing meetings and presentations that explored such issues as rearmament, the European Coal and Steel Community, and German reunification. The organization also had a number of experts at its disposal to present speeches and lead discussions. At these meetings, the ADK would distribute its own political information bulletins and brochures supplied by the Federal Press Agency or other organizations. By 1953 the ADK was reported to have held over 2,200 assemblies and discussions that drew in almost 200,000 people, a figure that would grow over the next few years. In addition, the ADK distributed 1.1 million brochures, pamphlets, and books in 1953.⁴⁶

Perhaps its most unusual effort in public relations was its use of film, with 40 percent of its public events featuring films—mostly produced on behalf of the Federal Press Agency. The ADK utilized a newly founded firm named Mobilwerbung to screen these films. Created at Lenz's suggestion, Mobilwerbung dispatched over a dozen Volkswagen buses equipped with projectors and screens to town squares and other public places. This firm performed considerable work for the CDU/CSU during the 1953 Bundestag campaign, informing audiences about such themes as reconstruction, reunification, the Schuman Plan, the 17 June uprising in East Berlin, and Adenauer's 1953 trip to the United States.⁴⁷ Perhaps most importantly, the ADK staged these events not as didactic instruction on the part of government, but instead as grassroots discussions among citizens concerning the future of their nation. Although few of the ADK's public discussions and presentations dealt with economics, by distributing pro-government materials the ADK helped support the government's economic policy.⁴⁸

The Federal Press Agency itself was also active in support of the government as the 1953 Bundestag election neared. In August of 1952 Felix von Eckardt, the head of the agency, outlined for Adenauer its strategy for the upcoming campaign. The key to success, he argued, was "to convince the man on the street that the economic upswing, unquestionably caused by the policies of the government, has not benefited only certain groups, but all levels of society." The agency's propaganda should highlight the benefits of the government's economic policy particularly to those who had suffered severely during the war. Von Eckardt counseled the chancellor that this display of the economic upswing should not be con-

veyed through any logical argumentation. Instead, the populace wanted to see the government take concrete measures that would appear to guarantee a higher living standard. Von Eckardt suggested one such measure, lowering the taxes on basic groceries, such as milk, bread, meat, butter, and sugar, would accomplish this—and it was, in fact, a policy that the government instituted prior to the election.⁴⁹ As the election neared, the Federal Press Agency geared up its public relations efforts, especially providing material to journalists recounting the work and successes of the Adenauer's government. Von Eckardt reported that between January and July 1953 the Federal Press Agency spent around DM 2.2 million and disseminated over 100 new publications. Many of these dealt with economic issues, for example brochures supporting the social market economy.⁵⁰ Thanks to the government's public relations machinery, propaganda on behalf of the CDU/CSU was increasingly professionalized, coordinated, and ubiquitous compared to the 1949 campaign.

As the government churned out an array of propaganda materials in support of its own policies, the personality of Chancellor Adenauer played the central role in the election campaign—clearly a departure from the 1949 campaign. During the years prior to the election, Adenauer's popularity had grown rapidly. According to the polls, respondents naming him the “most capable German politician” climbed from 5 percent in September 1948 to 33 percent in August 1952. This contrasted with Schumacher's positive assessment before his death in August 1952 hovering around 12 percent.⁵¹ By June 1953, 51 percent of respondents named Adenauer as the “most capable,” in comparison to a mere 6 percent for Erich Ollenhauer, the main SPD candidate.⁵² As the popularity of Adenauer rose, that of the CDU/CSU grew apace. Party leadership after the election identified Adenauer's trip to the United States in April 1953 as the campaign's turning point, arguing that the trip “crystallized” the public's perception of Adenauer as a statesmanlike figure.⁵³ Polling results backed up this assessment. Particularly revealing were the responses to a running poll by the Institut für Demoskopie's that asked: “Which party do you support?” At the time of Adenauer's trip to the United States, the CDU/CSU's popularity climbed from 37 to 39 percent with the 17 June uprising, and up to 45 percent by the time of the election.⁵⁴ Perceptions of Adenauer's policy also shot up dramatically: witness the 27 percent of respondents supporting his policy in late 1951, compared to the 52 percent favorable figure by the summer of 1953.⁵⁵ The West German public increasingly perceived Adenauer and his leadership as signifying growing respect and acceptance for West Germany abroad and greater stability at home.

In no small measure, Adenauer's enhanced reputation was the result of the public relations work orchestrated by the Federal Press Agency and its associated organizations. Adenauer's trip to the United States itself, hosted by President Eisenhower, was largely conceived and carried out with political propaganda in mind. Lenz and the Federal Press Agency did their utmost to convert the trip into political capital. Most notable among their efforts was the production of the film *Ein Mann wirbt für Sein Volk* (A Man Promotes his Nation), a somewhat clum-

sily crafted, half-hour documentary depicting Adenauer's visit. It portrayed a strong and vibrant leader who was building a close friendship and partnership between West Germany and the United States—a theme developed especially through “photo ops” of such events as President Eisenhower's White House reception for Adenauer and the chancellor's dramatic wreath-laying at Arlington National Cemetery. The film, like much of the agency's propaganda, was produced and screened by the Mobilwerbung firm and its subsidiaries, although the Federal Press Agency's von Eckardt oversaw its final content.⁵⁶

Despite his dislike for journalists, Adenauer cultivated his relationship with the press during the run-up to the election by granting a number of interviews with selected journalists. In addition, a special rail car, used by Hermann Göring during the Third Reich, hustled Adenauer across West Germany during the campaign. Accompanying the chancellor was his publicity team and a group of hand-picked reporters who rode in a dining/sleeping car on Adenauer's train with the expectation that they would help favorably shape Adenauer's image on the campaign trail. Finally, the Federal Press Agency effectively orchestrated Adenauer's stops at towns and villages into “events” that sparked intense interest among the local inhabitants. Loudspeakers at local gatherings would announce his much anticipated arrival, replete with brass bands, flags, and the mass distribution of leaflets and other propaganda materials. Upon seeing how well villagers, refugees, and common people received Adenauer during the campaign, Herbert Blankenhorn made a telling observation. He had feared that the middle classes “would never produce a personality who possessed the mystic quality of leadership for a state of the masses” and that totalitarian regimes understood the need for a “dynamic, powerful character who satisfies people's fantasies and their inner need for protection. Without a shadow of doubt, the Chancellor has something of these qualities, so difficult to define.” Adenauer rarely disappointed the crowds thanks in part to his aggressive style of speaking, which was filled with ferocious and often personal attacks against his political opponents—especially the SPD.⁵⁷

Not only was Adenauer the focal point of the election, but as in the 1949 election, he had an important role in plotting the CDU/CSU's campaign strategy. From Adenauer's perspective, the stakes were high for the 1953 election. The chancellor was absolutely adamant in his belief that the defeat of the union parties and a subsequent coalition led by the SPD would prove calamitous for West Germany. As indicated by many of the polls taken in the early 1950s, an SPD victory was a distinct possibility. As Adenauer explained in a January 1952 CDU executive committee meeting, “The debate in the Bundestag has shown that the CDU alone carries the responsibility for democratic politics. . . . If the SPD becomes the strongest party [in the Bundestag election] that would mean a catastrophe for democratic politics.”⁵⁸ On other occasions he underscored the CDU/CSU's focus in the election: “The 1953 Bundestag election should be the decisive election. It requires, therefore, careful preparation. If we do not win this election, then without a doubt, socialism and materialism will take over.” For Adenauer, the SPD constituted a “totalitarian party” that would undo all of his

work to integrate West Germany with the West. So deep was Adenauer's animosity toward the SPD that he did not even attend the funeral of his bitter SPD rival, Kurt Schumacher, in August 1952.⁵⁹

As in the 1949 election, the SPD bore the brunt of the CDU/CSU's attacks, which this time around were conducted by a broad network of institutions built to influence public opinion. However, Adenauer not only had to contend with the SPD from the left, but also had to thwart the aspirations of the bourgeois parties from the right. As former Nazis had regained voting rights by the 1953 election, the FDP and DP, coalition partners of the CDU/CSU, had strengthened their nationalist platforms and, for enhanced electoral support, created stronger ties to veterans' groups for support. Adenauer hoped to contain these nationalist sentiments as they would threaten his policy of integrating West Germany with the West and revitalize what to him were the worst elements in Germany's past. A key challenge he faced in the 1953 campaign would be to restrain some of these nationalist elements within the more moderate confines of the CDU/CSU as a whole, or at a minimum within a coalition led by the party. Consequently, the CDU/CSU's propaganda attempted to attract more nationalist opinions. To appeal to the growing number of military associations, Adenauer visited the Werl prison, where the British still detained some military officers for war crimes, and spoke personally with the Waffen SS General Kurt Meyer to ensure that his confinement conditions were appropriate. In addition, the chancellor traveled to the town of Friedrichsruhe outside of Hamburg to lay a wreath at Bismarck's grave.⁶⁰

Even with these side issues, public opinion surveys indicated early on that the public was disgruntled over the rise of prices resulting from the Korean War and directed its resentment toward the government. During the Korean Crisis, Institut für Demoskopie surveys showed that many West Germans held the government as responsible for the price hikes (46 percent), while 37 percent assigned the blame to world market prices. In addition, 75 percent responded that the government could do something about the rise in prices if it wished.⁶¹ This criticism of the government remained, although its intensity declined as the election approached. In July 1953, 25 percent of respondents regarded economic problems, wages, prices, and currency as the most important questions facing West Germans, down from 45 percent in October 1951. Meanwhile the issue of reunification as the primary concern grew from 18 to 38 percent over the same period.⁶² By September 1953, 36 percent of the population believed the government should concern itself with the solving economic problems, compared to the 32 percent believing German reunification was the most pressing problem.⁶³

In the Federal Press Agency, the government had an instrument to influence public opinion on an ongoing basis. As noted earlier part of the agency's strategy was to obscure its link to propaganda by publishing materials that did not acknowledge the agency as their originator and then supplying these materials to various organizations for distribution. One such example during the Korean Crisis was the brochure *Preisfibel* (Price Primer), which was designed to instruct West Germans, especially women, about the mechanisms of the free market. In 1952,

the Federal Press Agency printed over 100,000 of these brochures with funding from the German Chamber of Commerce. The publication proved quite popular. In fact, the *Deutscher Hausfrauenverband* (League of German Housewives) requested 100,000 copies, although it received only 50,000, with the remainder going to various political and economic organizations, universities, and libraries.

In exploring the workings of supply and demand, the brochure positioned the female homemaker as a student of the free market. It opened with “Ten short stories on prices! Unbelievable, but true!” which tried to delve into the irrationality of “buyers’ psychoses” and at the same time introduce the concept of the West German consumer citizen. Among the stories were examples of consumers buying more expensive products because they were marked as “special,” along with illustrations of how a planned economy disrupted the natural flow of supply and demand. The brochure stressed how consumers’ actions influenced the workings of the market and had larger political-economic implications for West Germany as a whole. The *Preisfibel*’s influence was relatively limited since its distribution was not extensive, and it was probably read only within select circles. Nevertheless, it was but one of a number of brochures published and distributed by the Federal Press Agency in the years following the Korean Crisis. All of them had a common theme: the rise in prices and the economic challenges presented by the Korean Crisis were not actually so severe but rather were a matter of perception, and a planned economy would only worsen economic conditions. The brochures had titles such as “*Aufstieg oder Katastrophe*” (Ascent or Catastrophe), “*Verdiene wir zu wenig*” (Do We Earn Too Little?), “*Acht Jahre danach . . . Soziale Sicherheit für alle*” (Eight Years Afterward . . . Social Security for All), “*Anderen haben auch Sorgen*” (Others Also Have Concerns), and “*Haben die Anderen es besser?*” (Are Others Better Off?).⁶⁴

Economic conditions markedly improved for the CDU/CSU in the months leading up to the election. As a report from the CDU/CSU’s central party office indicated, “Then in the spring 1953 the general trends in the areas of foreign and economic policies had progressed so that the growing weight of their positive effects for the entire population appeared, and only such a crystallization point was needed to cause a decisive swing in the public opinion.”⁶⁵ Undoubtedly the shocks from the Korean Crisis, especially the rise in prices, had undermined support for both the government and its economic policy of the social market economy. By 1953, however, the effects of the Korean Crisis had begun to wane and public perception was catching up with economic statistics. In early 1953, public opinion in regard to the rise in prices improved. A survey asked, “Do you have the impression that the prices in the last quarter year have for the most part remained the same, risen, or fallen?” The percent of respondents believing prices had risen dropped from 50 percent in late 1952 to 24 percent in September 1953, the month of the election. Meanwhile, those convinced prices had remained constant rose from 35 to 52 percent over the same period. Even those contending that prices had declined went up to 12 percent by election time.⁶⁶ In addition, in July 1953 85 percent of respondents indicated that their economic

condition had gotten better or remained the same during the last year. This figure had jumped up from only 43 percent in May 1951.⁶⁷

This shift in public opinion resulted from the fact that price indexes had fallen to levels not significantly higher than at the start of the Korean Crisis. For example, the cost of living index dropped to 108 in the summer of 1953 from a high of 119 in the first half of 1951 (1950=100).⁶⁸ Moreover, in order to give consumers the impression that prices were falling during the months before the election, the government tactically lowered taxes on consumer products such as coffee, tea, and tobacco—a move suggested by von Eckardt and described by some as motivated purely by polling results. The unemployment figure also fell below 5.5 percent, with the total unemployment under 1 million by the time of the election. Given these developments, the CDU/CSU's claims that times were improving rang true with the public.⁶⁹

In addition to the Federal Press Agency-supplied public opinion polls that functioned as market research of the electorate, the CDU/CSU began commissioning specific surveys to test the resonance of particular pieces of propaganda—just as was often done for advertising spots. One such survey explored the effectiveness of political leaflets. The survey concluded that the effectiveness in convincing the public of its ideas was not dependent on the leaflet's content, but rather on its propensity to be noticed by the public.⁷⁰ This survey reflected a number of developments. First, it showed how the Institut für Demoskopie was transferring techniques from commercial advertising to the political realm. Increasingly, a party's program was a product to be sold to the electorate. Second, the survey also demonstrated the more "scientific" efforts on the part of the CDU/CSU to craft its image, rather than to base its political campaigns upon a political program or speculation about the public mood. Clearly, the CDU/CSU was innovating in terms of the techniques used to shape its message and image for public consumption. In fact, for the first time, the party utilized a private advertising firm, that of Dr. Hegemann from Düsseldorf, to distribute its posters—allowing the party leadership to concentrate on running the campaign.⁷¹

A crucial requirement for this development of a CDU/CSU "image" was the construction of a more centralized party structure to direct and organize the election campaign—a move accomplished at the October 1950 Goslar Congress. The CDU federal party organization now consisted of the *Parteitag* (party convention), made up of representatives from the regional organizations, the *Bundesparteiausschuß* (federal party committee), which included chairpersons and leading members from the regional organizations, the chairpersons of the federal and state *Fraktionen* (parliamentary factions), and members of the *Bundesparteivorstand* (federal executive committee). The *Bundesparteiausschuß* elected the executive committee members, while the *Parteitag* elected the party chairperson and two deputies. At the Goslar Congress Adenauer was voted chairperson by an overwhelming majority of 302 ayes with 22 abstentions and 4 nays. Part of creating a national party organization was the formation of the *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* (central party headquarters). The *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* took over the party's administrative

duties, including coordinating election campaigns, but was financed mainly from the regional organizations. Heading the *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* was Bruno Heck, a relatively unknown politician from Swabia Adenauer named to the post in the spring of 1952. Despite the efforts to construct a federal-level party machinery, in many respects much of the actual political and administrative power within the party, as with the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der CDU/CSU* in 1949, remained with the regional organizations.

The CDU did not achieve a highly organized party bureaucracy until the 1960s. In contrast, during the 1950s it remained an association of regional organizations, since many of the party members associated party bureaucracy and centralization with past totalitarianism, the SPD, or the East German Marxist party, the SED (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, Socialist Unity Party). Throughout the 1950s, the CDU leadership contemptuously referred to SPD “functionaries” to draw a contrast to what they saw as their party’s more grassroots workings and doggedly sought to retain that dynamic. For example, the regional organizations made certain that the federal party proceeded through them to contact the district organizations. In addition the regional organizations drew up the list of candidates for both state and federal elections. In many instances serious rivalries divided the regional parties—especially among regional organization within the individual states, such as the Rhineland and Westphalia-Lippe organizations in the state of North Rhine–Westphalia. In addition, regional organizations in the southern part of West Germany tended to resist centralization more determinedly than those in the north.⁷² The most striking element in the regionalization of the CDU/CSU’s campaigning was the Christian Social Union (CSU), the CDU’s sister party in the Bundestag parliamentary faction. It was an autonomous political party that had allied itself with the CDU at the national level. Overall, because of Adenauer’s popularity on the national scene, the CSU tended to fall in line with the CDU in the formulation of its Bundestag campaigns.

It was primarily in elections, however, that the CDU’s federal organization came to life and exerted its power. Despite the political importance of regional politicians, the leadership in Bonn, especially the powerful presence of Adenauer and his staff, established the party’s public positions and propaganda for the election campaigns. The *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* asserted itself prior to the 1953 election with efforts representing a clear movement toward the centralization of CDU/CSU campaigning—especially in comparison to the 1949 campaign. In many instances the district organizations were quite weak owing to low membership and became active only during election campaigns. The *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* wanted to direct the district organizations as much as possible; for example, it dispatched to every district organization a detailed “*Wahlhelfer*” (election guide) describing the work that needed to be done before the election.⁷³ In any event, despite the central leadership’s desire to control not only the conceptual but also the technical aspects of the campaign, the regional-level organizations still constituted the major force directing the actual campaigning within their regions.⁷⁴ They also exerted some influence on the conceptual framework of the campaign. As the strategy for

the campaign was coalescing, in January 1953 Heck met with the regional party managers to discuss their requirements for the campaign and the respective responsibilities of the federal and regional party organizations. This session also decided that several regional party managers would participate in the committee charged with drawing up party propaganda—along with members of the *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* and commercial advertising experts.⁷⁵

In addition, considerable tension sometimes divided the federal and regional levels of the party with regard to financing. Income from monthly party dues in the CDU was miniscule: for example, about 210,000 members contributed roughly DM 100,000 a month in 1953—with most of that money remaining at the district levels. For election campaigns, the lion's share of the CDU's money came from the so-called *Fördergesellschaften*, the promotional associations, that organized industrial and business fund raising in the individual states.⁷⁶ In a March 1953 meeting of the CDU's executive committee, Adenauer commented that the party's regional organizations had ensured that the promotional associations were closely tied to them rather than to the party's national-level organization, which presented a serious problem for the running of a national campaign. At that point the party had negotiated with the promotional associations to contribute DM 6 million to the CDU for 1953, with 4 million going toward operating costs for the party (3 million to the regional organizations and 1 million to the central party) and 2 million going to the central party organization for the election campaign. At this juncture the CDU treasurer Ernst Bach estimated the federal party's campaign costs at about DM 2.6 million. Adenauer stressed that the campaign be centrally directed and “must display the same poster in Kiel and Constance,” meanwhile acknowledging that propaganda must also incorporate features with local and regional appeal or otherwise fall flat.⁷⁷ Despite the drive for centralization of the campaign, by the summer of 1953 Bach realized that DM 1 million earmarked for the central party campaign fund was being diverted directly to the regional organizations—especially in North Rhine–Westphalia. Adenauer did not hesitate to express his extreme displeasure at his party treasurer's allowing such a diversion to occur and stressed the importance of the funds to run an effective campaign.⁷⁸ Apparently, the central party eventually made up the difference by pursuing deficit spending and relying on income derived from subscriptions by industry to the so-called *Wirtschaftsbild*—an information sheet covering economic developments.⁷⁹ Despite these conflicts and problems in financing the central party, the *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* controlled enough of the funds and possessed sufficient leadership to shape the main campaign concepts.

Planning for the 1953 campaign began in earnest in October 1952, almost a year in advance of the election, when the “Wednesday circle” consisting of Adenauer, Heck, Lenz, Bach, and von Eckardt began holding weekly meetings to discuss campaign strategy.⁸⁰ Heck and the centralized party leadership of the *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* formulated the main vision that the party would project, while regional- and district-level party organizations did much of the campaign work. For example, the *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* had ensured that each of the 195 district

organizations had a party chairman, who was to be paid DM 400 a month, to oversee and direct the upcoming campaign. In addition, the *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* established a press section to more effectively coordinate publicity for the CDU/CSU at the national level, while the regional party headquarters created press bureaus to provide neutral journalists with press releases, news conferences, and contacts with the important regional-level CDU/CSU politicians. The so-called *Heimatzeitungen*, local papers friendly to the CDU/CSU, were supplied weekly with a variety of interviews, reports, and candidate portraits; they printed much of what was provided word for word. More importantly, by the autumn of 1952 a survey of the sociological makeup and political development of each of the individual election districts was conducted and made available to all levels of the party. The party was carefully monitoring the “mass-psychological situation” within the electorate as well through public opinion polling.⁸¹ In fact, during the campaign, *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* manager Bruno Heck regularly sent to regional party leaders updates drawn from public opinion surveys in order to keep them abreast of the developing political situation.⁸² Throughout the campaign the *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* had at its disposal a wide variety of public opinion polling from the Institut für Demoskopie, along with survey data from EMNID analyzing party support as a function of sociological background.⁸³

Public opinion surveys clarified a number of key points regarding the election campaign. The *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* reported that surveys indicated the CDU/CSU as a whole must secure the trust of the electorate through the trust that was given to the party’s leading personalities. The party’s propaganda must not make promises that would lack credibility. Instead, party propaganda had to concretely communicate to the electorate the party’s great successes over the last four years. Particularly important in shaping public opinion, the report argued, was the stabilization of prices since the Korean Crisis and the drop in unemployment to under 1 million. Clashes with political opponents, particularly the SPD, had to demonstrate that the SPD’s ideological approach to political problems accounted for its sterility and weakness. In addition, the CDU/CSU had to convince the electorate that the SPD had single-mindedly followed a program of negation in regard to the government’s successful policies.⁸⁴

Overall, the CDU/CSU should play down any notion that the election revolved around ideological conflict between the CDU/CSU and the SPD. In fact, the CDU/CSU consciously sought to deemphasize what were called “cultural-political questions”—religious issues in other words—for fear of scaring away potential voters by appearing solely as the “Christian party.”⁸⁵ As in the 1949 campaign, the CDU/CSU could count on the churches, especially the Catholic Church, to urge their flocks to vote for the “Christian party.”⁸⁶ Instead of engaging in ideological conflict, the CDU/CSU wanted to sell the party image that was embodied by its leadership, particularly Adenauer or even Erhard, and its accomplishments, especially in the diplomatic and economic realms. In this respect, the party’s approach utilized the advertising technique of selling not the product itself, that is, the party and its leadership, but rather a benefit of the product, such as in-

creased living standards or an enhanced sense of security, that would subjectively appeal to the consumer/voter.

In the course of the 1953 campaign, the CDU/CSU had acquired the tools to understand and reach out to the broadest constituencies, thereby facilitating its emergence as a *Volkspartei*. Its approach tending toward issue- and mood-based campaigning reflected the growing American influence on the West German political culture. Dr. Robert Tillmanns, chairman of the Berlin CDU, clearly voiced this philosophy of politics when he commented at a CDU executive committee meeting that only a quite limited group of people could be reached through clumsy political slogans. People no longer wanted to hear mere party squabbling. Instead, Tillmanns suggested, “We must take into consideration totally different social strata and different attitudes. . . . For the Bundestag election we don’t need an extensive, vague program for all our economic and social policies, but instead we need clearly worked out and impressive goals and points for the present situation of our nation.”⁸⁷ Taking this approach, the CDU/CSU propaganda continually hammered away about the SPD as a danger to the future security of West Germany, while at the same time it trumpeted the CDU/CSU’s diplomatic and economic achievements since 1949.

This political propaganda utilized some of the approaches the party exploited in the 1949 Bundestag election. During that election the CDU/CSU had emphasized economics as an ideological “wedge” between itself and the SPD. The underlying message of its campaign was that the two economic systems presented a choice: the organic, antimaterialist, Christian society of the CDU/CSU versus the atomized, materialist, godless society of the SPD. As previously mentioned, in 1953 the CDU/CSU was consciously trying to broaden its constituency—especially among nonreligious, antisocialist voters. As a result, instead of associating the social market economy with pulling West Germany out of total despair and fostering the regeneration of “natural” gender roles, familial life, and a Christian community, the CDU/CSU began emphasizing more consumerist visions of its economic policy. In addition, the party exploited developments in East Germany, especially the Soviets’ use of brutal force to suppress the 17 June 1953 worker uprising in East Berlin, to bolster its image as the party of strength. Throughout its propaganda, the CDU/CSU defined the SPD as unreliable by blurring the distinctions between the SPD in West Germany and the SED in East Germany. In this way, the issue of economics was combined with the Cold War threat of communism—albeit in a different vein from the antimaterialist message of 1949. Instead, West Germany’s economic vitality, along with the rise of consumerism, was what made the new state dynamic and legitimate in comparison with its eastern counterpart.

Although its continued emphasis on traditional propaganda materials—posters, leaflets, and rallies—ate up 28, 14, and 9 percent of the federal-level campaign budget respectively, the CDU/CSU also began employing new forms of political advertising that were clearly influenced by decidedly American forms of advertising. One of the most important propaganda pieces distributed by the

Bundesgeschäftsstelle was an illustrated magazine, *Die Entscheidung* (The Decision), which boasted a circulation of 5 million copies and consumed 21 percent of the campaign budget.⁸⁸ The magazine's tone echoed the advertising techniques developed in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s—especially the creation of “human-interest” stories in which the reader is invited to share a story or experience with the ad's characters. In clear contrast to the “hard-sell” approach taken with most leaflets and posters by projecting an over-the-top mood, the cover depicted an attractive, young-looking, smiling woman holding a pen against her forehead—apparently about to cast her ballot. Much of the election magazine dealt with the division of Germany, the 17 June uprising, and the economic and social advances achieved by the CDU/CSU, but these issues were couched in very human terms. Chancellor Adenauer was featured prominently in the magazine. He was depicted, for example, involved in meetings with foreign leaders (one picture showed him on the U.S. Capitol steps), addressing a crowd in West Berlin after the 17 June uprising, and engaged in personal activities such as tending his beloved rose garden. Erhard was portrayed lighting a cigar with the caption, “Always calm, with a good cigar, and the right economic policy, Economics Minister Erhard tore up the ration cards.”

Intermingled among the depictions of Adenauer and his accomplishments, the magazine portrayed West Germany's economic advancement since the currency reform, and more importantly illustrated how these achievements improved the conditions of individual West Germans. The message of economic reconstruction was particularly geared toward female voters, who were the central pillar of CDU/CSU support. One example of this pitch to female voters recounts the “diary” of the woman on the front of the magazine from the summer of 1945 to the summer of 1953 (Illustration 5.1 and Illustration 5.2). The text and photos depicted experiences common to many Germans after the end of the war: flight from the Russians, internment camps, death and destruction in the cities, squalid living conditions, hunger, and the black market. This woman had to work as a rubble woman clearing the mounds of debris from the streets of Schweinfurt in order to earn ration cards to eat. As with other conservative propaganda, the narrative started after the defeat of the Third Reich. The story placed Germans into the role of victims of terrible hardships following the war and thereby distanced them from any responsibility for the crimes of the Third Reich. In addition, it highlighted the fear this woman had of the Russians in 1945, making an implicit parallel to the contemporary threat from the East in 1953. The ad also echoed the popular narrative of the currency reform: West Germans now suddenly earned money worth something and were able to buy previously unavailable food and goods. Women had been transformed from powerless victims of shortages to now active consumers. The narrator, apparently a single, working woman, vowed to herself, “I will never be disheartened and never forget this dreadful time. And I will also never forget, when I am full, how much hunger hurts.” Then, in late spring of 1953, the narrator gushed about the new material goods that she was enjoying. She had acquired a new typewriter at work, a bicycle for traveling around the city,

SCHICKSAL

BILDER AUS

3. August 1945

Jetzt sind wir genau acht Tage hier am Main. Ein Wunder, daß wir überhaupt noch leben ... Nichts ist uns erspart geblieben. Erst der Treck, die endlose Flucht vor den Russen, dann in Prag der Aufstieg der Tschechen um 3. Mai, wieder Flucht zu den Amerikanern — und dann zwei Monate Internierungslager, Hunger, Demütigungen, Angst — vor den Tschechen, vor der Roten Armee, die nur sechs Kilometer entfernt lag. Plötzlich setzte man uns auf LKW's und lud uns nach zwei Tagen in Schicksalsfurt aus. Wir hatten nichts mehr. Oma erinnerte sich an Verwandte, die hier wohnten. Also machten wir uns auf den Weg. Jetzt bin ich todmüde, Oma betete ganz tut. Chose den kleinen Max, den ich im Treck aufgeben habe, hätten wir es nicht geschafft. Zu essen gibt es hier ganz offenbar überhaupt nichts ... Die Stadt liegt in Trümmern — ein Taubkessel voll Ruinen. Das ist selbst für uns nach all der Versichtung, dem Tod und der Not ein grauenvoller Anblick. In der Hitze wirbelt der kleinste Wind den Staub hoch auf, zum Erstickern. Es ist ein rotgelber, fettiger Staub, der noch nach Brand riecht. Ich trinke manchmal davon. Dann wache ich auf und reberte ...




21. Januar 1946

Ich spiele Dienstmadchen, bin gemietet und habe Lebensmittelkarten. „Wir haben wenig, aber das haben wir mehr ...“ Gestern ließ der OB eine „Ehrenamtskarte“ für Schulraumung verteilen. Wer sich drückt, beim Ehrenamt!!!, der bekommt keine Lebensmittelkarten. Peng! Wer liebt im Monat pro Nase 120 Gramm Fett. Ein Pfund Butter kostet im Schwarzhandel 250 bis 300 Mark, eine Dose Olandrin 75 Mark. Mandelvoll verhöre ich ein Schmuckstück — schäbige Rette — und kaufe was für Oma. Sonst zieht die alte Frau das nicht durch.



15. November 1946

Dieser Winter ist furchtbar. Wir werden alle so stark dünner, daß man direkt zwischen kann. Knieen sind überhaupt nicht anzutreiben, und zu essen gibt es fast nichts. Von Mutt und meinen Brüdern habe Ichi. Meine Cheffe hat mir eine Fou-de-Chapeau-Flasche voll Trun verschert. Die Duftmischung ist sagenhaft — aber es ist doch wenigstens Fett. Hin und wieder jense ich jetzt auch hamstern — einfach weil ich muß. Jedermal ein lebensspfähliches Unternehmen. So von vollen Zügen hat es noch nicht gegeben. Dad denn ist man auch glücklich, ein paar Pfund Kartoffeln, Eier oder, Gott behüte, sogar ein Stück Speck zu erwischen. Ich zittere vor jedemmal vor einer Kontrolle. Das sieht auszumachen, wenn wir die Anse über die deutsche Polizei wieder alles abnehmen würden.

15.

Illustration 5.1 Snapshots out of a German diary (a)

and a pair of stylish (*todschicke*) shoes from a store with so wide a selection that it was hard to decide which pair to buy . In the last entry, dated 7 June 1953, the narrator was even planning a long vacation and trying to stick to her plan of reading a book a week. But it had been difficult to select the books “[s]ince the selection is enormous—and there is so much that one simply must have.” The lesson

DIE ENTSCHEIDUNG

1945 - 1953

EINEM DEUTSCHEN TAGEBUCH



23. August 1948

Ich kann es gar nicht glauben, endlich ist unser Geld wieder etwas wert. Das Tag der Währungsreform werde ich nie vergessen! Demen gerichtet wurde ja schon genug – aber er kam nicht! Wir standen weiter bei jedem Wetter und stundenlang Schlange für 100 Gramm Weißbrot oder ähnliche Konstanten. Und dann war es endlich doch soweit! Die Schwarzschändler, wie die 'renovierten' mit den dünnen Briefböckchen Heller 10-Mark. Die wurden sie doch so rasch nicht los, und einzahlen auf eine Bank, das ging auch nicht. Mir kamen sie vor wie Ratten, die ein stinkendes Schiff verlassen wollen. Aber das rettende Land war weit... Und dann haben wir unsere neunzig Mark pro Nase abgeteilt, die andere Hälfte von den vierzig gab es nach nicht sofort. Das waren für Oma, Nusi und mich sechzig Mark.

Wie herrlich! Jetzt habe ich neues Mat. Mutti schrieb aus der französischen Zone, alle sind gesund. Die Jünger arbeiten. Meine Arbeit bringt wieder richtiges Geld, für das man auch was kaufen kann. Ich verspreche mir selber, ich werde nun wieder etwas sein und diese grauenvolle Zeit nie vergessen. Und auch nie vergessen, wenn ich selber toll bin, wie wohl Hunger tut. Dieser Tage habe ich mir sogar einen kleinen Hut gekauft. Ist das nicht ein tolles Bild, wie die anderen zum Schaufenster stehen und die Auslagen bestaunen? Ja, wir können es eben alle noch nicht richtig glauben – das Bild soll wirklich zu Ende sein.



11. September 1948

Jetzt sind die Läden bei uns wieder voll, gefüllt wie im Frieden. Zu richtig haben wir alle nicht daran geglaubt, daß der Markwährungsreform und der Schwarzmarkt und die Hungergeißel endlich vorbei sein sollen. Aber als ich gestern bei Frau Müller – das ist unsere Metzgerei-Frau gegenüber – einhaschen war, da hat sie mich ausgereizt und gefragt: „Ach, darf es nicht von der Japanserie für 'ne Zigarette mehr sein?“ Ich habe gedacht, ich fülle um. Für das Stückchen Wurst bin ich noch vor ein paar Minuten ohne anzuhalten zehn Kilometer weit gelaufen und habe womöglich meine letzte Währungsreform gegeben. Und dieselbe Frau Müller hat damals so gut geglaubt, daß sie selber mit der Kleinsten, Zigarette immer auf ein Milligramm fertig wurde. Jetzt glaube ich es wirklich, wenn wir wieder unter runter oder noch mehr Waren kriegen können und so viel kaufen, wie wir wollen – denn wird alles gut. Oh ich jemals ganz vergessen kann, daß mir Essen das Wichtigste auf der Welt war!

24. Mai 1953

Meine Güte, da habe ich doch mein alter Tagebuch richtig vergessen. Merk-würdig, wenn man wieder liest, was damals los war und was für jeden von uns lebenswichtig schien. Die gemeinsame Not macht doch alle wirklich gleich. Heute hat sich das wirklich geändert. Die sind meine Kollegen, verdammt, und unser Chef sich einen neuen Wagen kauft. Ich finde das wunderbar – daß es Leute gibt, die sich das leisten können – und daß man einfach anziehen und auch gleich kaufen kann. Das war ein richtiger Spaß, all die Prospekte anzusehen von den verschiedenen Firmen. Und ein paar mal hat mich Frau Wellmann auch auf eine Probefahrt mitgenommen. Warum soll ich da meckeln sein? Dafür haben wir auch im Büro alle neue Schreibmaschinen bekommen, leuchten. Es ist ein Spaß, darauf zu arbeiten. Und einen Durchschnitt gibt es noch, und wenn es nicht ganz geschmeichelt ist, denn sollen wir nächsten Jahr sogar ein eigenes Schwimmbad für den Betrieb bekommen. Ebenso gut könnte ich mich ärgern, daß die Frau Hauptmann einen Prinzen geheiratet hat. Ich habe dafür mein Fahrrad und ihn damit richtig glücklich. Wie lange ich mir das schon wünsche! Und wie herrlich, als ich dann die ganze Stadt nach meinem Fahrrad abfragen konnte. Ein Paar tolle kleine Schätze habe ich mir einige Wochen auch geleistet. Die Aussicht war so groß, daß ich noch überhaupt nicht einschließen konnte. Wenn er hat mich dabei geholt, das Bild? Aber das Bild ist eigentlich recht weit geworden.



FORTSETZUNG AUF SEITE 22

Illustration 5.2 Snapshots out of a German diary (b)

of the whole article was clear: West German living conditions had improved incredibly in the last eight years and ensured the end of the deprivations of the postwar years. Both this individual woman's and West Germany's prospects had been dramatically transformed. To continue this upward trajectory West Germans must vote CDU/CSU.

The technical layout of the advertisement was decidedly more advanced than the brochures and leaflets from the 1949 campaign. *Die Entscheidung* had the feel of a real magazine and interspersed actual advertisements for consumer goods among the articles and photographs—both giving it an aura of legitimacy and helping defray some its costs.⁸⁹ This was not a dry announcement of the CDU/CSU policies and a list of figures describing West Germany's economic growth, nor was it a provocative visual image meant to shock or scare the audience. Instead, the reader was invited to share very personally in the story of a young refugee who was rebuilding her life in West Germany. It was selling a political message in a way that did not seem overtly political or heavy-handed. Clearly the CDU/CSU was responding to certain polling that indicated women were even less likely than men to talk about politics. One spring 1952 poll indicated that 64 percent of women never spoke about politics, in comparison to 23 percent of men.⁹⁰ In addition, the diary of this young woman placed economic developments since the end of the Second World War in a much more individualistic context than propaganda from 1949. Economic reconstruction as a means of satisfying consumerist, individual desires was clearly stressed, while the more antimaterialist conceptions of the social market economy were subdued, if not completely absent. The idea of a reconstructed family life was muted, as this woman continued to “stand alone” eight years after the end of the war but had found fulfillment in pursuing new opportunities for consumerism. Clearly this ad was aimed more toward voters outside the CDU/CSU's base of religious-minded citizens.

The “German miracle,” as the CDU/CSU termed it, also had overtones that placed West German economic reconstruction within a larger geopolitical context. Even before the 17 June uprising in East Berlin, it was clear that foreign policy and the threat of communism would continue to play a central role in the campaign. A poll from July 1953 indicated that West Germans were deeply concerned with issues such reunification, preservation of peace between the East and West, and rearmament (34, 16, and 15 percent of respondents respectively saw these as West Germany's most important issues), while the issue of economics had declined in importance since the middle of the Korean Crisis (from 45 percent in October 1951 to 25 percent).⁹¹

The issues of German reunification and West German foreign policy had heated up since the 1949 election. In November 1949 Adenauer signed the Petersberg Agreement which allowed West Germany to reenter international organizations and establish consulates in other countries among other things. Within the context of the demands of the Korean War, French Minister President René Pleven proposed in October 1950 to combine Western military forces, including elements from West Germany, in the so-called European Defense Community (EDC). In May 1952 West Germany and the three Western powers of the United States, Great Britain, and France signed the General Treaty that recognized the sovereignty of the Federal Republic, pledged to work toward a unified Germany modeled on the existing Federal Republic, and anchored the Federal Republic within the growing framework of Western international institutions. Adenauer pushed

through acceptance of the EDC and the General Treaty in the Bundestag, and the treaties were passed by March 1953. The General Treaty was developed in conjunction with West German contributions to the EDC. Therefore, when the French parliament refused to ratify the EDC treaty in August 1954, new talks ensued with the three Western powers, producing a new General Treaty in October 1954 and granting final West German sovereignty in May 1955. All the while, the Soviet Union tried to block, or at least slow down, Adenauer's policy of Western integration. Between March and May 1952 Stalin issued a series of three "notes" calling for the unification of a sovereign, neutral Germany with free national elections supervised by the four powers. Although some, particularly on the left, interpreted Stalin's overtures as potentially genuine, Adenauer saw these actions as mere propaganda on Stalin's part and demanded that unification be achieved through Germany's integration into the West.

In the early 1950s the SPD under both Schumacher's and Ollenhauer's leadership had vigorously attacked Adenauer and the CDU/CSU as pawns of the occupational forces working for West Germany's integration into the West. They particularly pointed to, for example, the drive for rearmament initiated by Adenauer in the spring of 1950, talks about Western economic integration with the European Coal and Steel Community, and the ultimately unsuccessful plan to create the EDC. To the SPD, Adenauer's Western policy ensured the continued division of Germany and heightened the risk of another catastrophic war. Instead, the SPD argued, West Germany must remain free of commitments on either side of the Iron Curtain and continue negotiations among the four Allied powers and Germany. With the death of Stalin in March 1953 and Winston Churchill's call for renewed four-power discussions, the issue of reunification once again came to the fore. The SPD made use of these developments; one of the main points of its 1953 campaign platform proclaimed, "Peace and security through communication—not danger of war through an arms race."⁹²

The CDU/CSU zeroed in on what might come across in a heated election campaign as a weak and indecisive SPD position. It wanted to blur the distinctions between the SPD of West Germany and the communist SED of East Germany. This was done by a variety of means. One article from *Union in Deutschland*, the CDU/CSU's information bulletin, proclaimed in April 1953, "They remain Marxists." The article painted a picture of the SPD internal reform of economic policy as a veiled attempt to gain votes.

They [the SPD leaders] want to fish widely for votes in the "bourgeois" waters, in order to pursue a socialist economic policy with the help of these votes. These policies are not as crassly Marxist as on the other side of the Elbe, but are along the same lines—especially in regard to the state seizure of the workings of the economy and labor policies.⁹³

Articles in the *Union in Deutschland* published closer to the election were not so subtle. One simply announced the conclusion of a refugee from the Soviet Zone, "Socialism leads to communism."⁹⁴

The 17 June revolt in East Berlin only heightened this sense of contrast between the two Germanies and the threat of communism. In the Bundestag debate that followed 17 June the SPD proclaimed that the brutal suppression of the uprising proved the failure of Adenauer's foreign and German policy and called for more negotiations among the four powers. In mid August, just weeks before the election, Adenauer claimed that two SPD functionaries had received funds from the Soviet Zone. The accused pair initiated court proceedings against Adenauer, and the chancellor withdrew his statements months later before a court. But nevertheless his attacks hit their mark, coming as they did just before the election. The CDU/CSU put pressure on the SPD by leadingly releasing to the press "Four Questions on Reunification" in an attempt to force the SPD to clarify its foreign policy position. In response on 28 August the SPD issued a paper entitled "The European Policy of the Social Democrats." It reaffirmed the SPD's position that the various efforts for European cooperation sought "to make [Germany] into an instrument of the Cold War." German policy must be directed toward German unification in freedom, an advancement that "required an agreement among the four occupying powers." Willie Eichler explained in an ill-conceived press conference that negotiations among the four powers were preferable to a victorious nuclear war. Although privately Adenauer desired a four-power conference on the German question at some future date, he wanted it to convene after the 6 September elections, for fear of the Soviets exploiting the talks as propaganda to defeat the CDU/CSU. In fact, in July 1953, Adenauer successfully appealed to the United States to postpone such a conference.⁹⁵ However, not wanting to lose an opportunity to make political hay, the CDU/CSU pounced on the SPD's pronouncement. The SPD foreign policy, Adenauer proclaimed, "would be a betrayal of the German people." According to a CDU/CSU press release, the SPD advocated "that the four powers, just as it was demanded by Moscow at the Potsdam Agreement, would negotiate with each other over the position of the future Germany." Therefore the SPD's policy would sell out Germany's political self-determination. The release concluded that "[t]he SPD appears to be ready to take on the political conceptions of Moscow on one of the most crucial issues and incur risks that no responsibly minded government could ever accept."⁹⁶ Overall, the CDU/CSU sought to convince the electorate that the SPD was at best incapable of governing or at worst untrustworthy, treasonous, and "un-German." Simultaneously the CDU/CSU touted itself as the only true defender of the West German state and society against a red tide poised to engulf the nation.⁹⁷

This sentiment that the SPD could not be trusted was expressed quite clearly in the most widely distributed CDU/CSU propaganda: leaflets, speeches, and posters—and especially in the campaign's most infamous poster, "All roads of Marxism lead to Moscow" (Illustration 5.3). With a landscape of lines all drawing the viewer's eyes to a half seen, half unseen Bolshevik lurking in the background, this poster exemplified the anticommunist tone of the CDU/CSU campaign as a whole. Like some of the posters from the 1949 election, this poster offered multiple readings to the electorate, although each evoked a sense of fear of alien forces

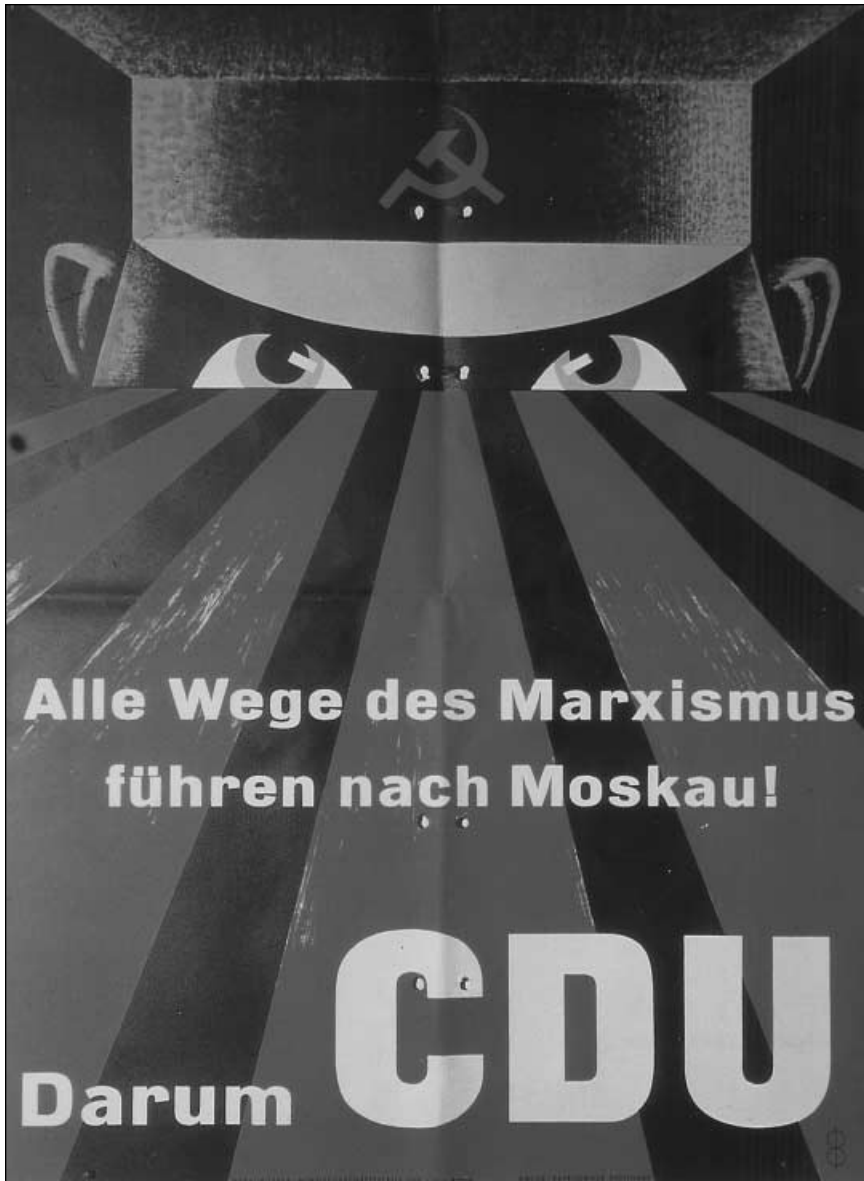


Illustration 5.3 All of roads of Marxism lead to Moscow

from within and from without West Germany. Fundamentally the poster erased any distinctions between the SPD and communism and implicitly defined the Social Democrats as a dangerous internal political element whose ultimate loyalties lay outside the Federal Republic. The poster's title, suggesting the well-known saying "All roads lead to Rome," played off the common sentiment that a glori-

ous element of Germany's cultural heritage lay in its ability to resist and remain outside the ancient empire—just as West Germany was now resisting the incursion of the totalitarian Soviet regime. Clearly, the 17 June uprising gave the poster special potency. Even though it was probably designed before the revolt, West Germans, especially refugees from the East, could interpret the poster as an affirmation of Adenauer's policy of West German security being tied to the West. To social conservatives it represented the danger to the "natural" order of gender and family roles in the face of the "*Gleichmacherei*" (leveling) of East Germany. From the perspective of economics, it illustrated the CDU/CSU's charge against the SPD that a policy of socialization led to the controlled economy of the communist states to the East.

The CDU/CSU's leaflets, aimed at the electorate's most impressionable and least educated segments, launched strong attacks against the SPD. In many ways the CDU/CSU's leaflets heeded the lesson from the Institut für Demoskopie survey: a political leaflet's principal task was to attract notice. Most of their leaflets incorporated eye-catching illustrations on the front and back pages, while the middle two pages offered more factual arguments. But compared to the illustrated magazine, they clearly represented a relatively crude "hard sell" approach filled with exaggeration, personal attacks, and innuendo.

One leaflet opened with the words, "Attention, Swindler!" above a drawing of grotesque-looking figures whispering into the unsuspecting voters' ears. It tainted the political reliability of the SPD by urgently warning the population "of red agents who are up to no good and are attempting to abuse the people's faith. The red agents whisper: The poorer have gotten poorer! The rich have gotten richer! Protect yourselves from these wolves in sheep's clothing." The rest of the leaflet provided statistics as evidence of the government's increased social spending, showing how the CDU/CSU was a "social" party. The final page evoked Biblical images by depicting an apple labeled "SPD" dangling from the tree of "Rising wages—falling prices," "Lowering of taxes," and "40-hour week." All the while, a snake labeled "inflation" smiles at a disconcerted-looking voter. The message was clear: the SPD could not be trusted. The accusatory references to "swindlers" and "red agents" portrayed the SPD as a sinister, insidious force. The party represented the infiltration of dangerous elements that would lead to West Germany being cast out from economic and social security, while in contrast the CDU/CSU sold itself as reconstructing a whole, prosperous West German "Eden."

The leaflet that perhaps made the clearest link between the SPD of West Germany and the Communists in East Germany was one that blasted the Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund (German Federation of Labor Unions, DGB), the West German trade union, for disseminating political propaganda prior to the election, a move of questionable legality since unions were required by law to remain politically neutral in election campaigns (Illustration 5.4). In the summer of 1953 the DGB's leadership called on West Germans to "Vote for a better Bundestag." Besides leaflets, the DGB produced glossy magazines with an estimated circulation of 14.5 million copies, explaining the DGB's unfulfilled demands, the increase in



Illustration 5.4 The CDU has said for years:

prices, and what it claimed was the government's inadequate social policy. Just before the election the organization placed an ad in newspapers playing off Die Waage's advertisements in which two workers concluded they would vote for a better Bundestag. The CDU/CSU leaflet exploited the DGB's call to "Vote for a better Bundestag" with a list of accusations against the DGB and the SPD. Beneath the text, a drawing depicted Olenhauer and a DGB representative blowing

a trumpet labeled “SPD.” Meanwhile, a Soviet officer claps his hands in approval in the background. Again, as in other examples of the CDU/CSU propaganda, the boundaries between the SPD, the DGB, and the Communists in East Germany were blurred. This leaflet was even more effective, given the accusations of the left’s connections to the SED that were flying around before the election. In fact, at a political rally in August, Adenauer claimed that the DGB’s appeal “reeked suspiciously of communist infiltration” and that the DGB’s board of directors was contaminated by communism.⁹⁸

The CDU/CSU leaflet concentrating on economics built upon this motif by utilizing the slogan “Whoops Comrade!” and citing examples of the SPD’s “false prophecies,” such as their dire predictions of Germany’s not becoming “viable” because of its economic policy. As in other leaflets, its middle pages provided statistics tracing the rise of production in West Germany and the increased buying power of workers’ wages. The back page depicted Erich Ollenhauer and Carlo Schmid as bloated SPD “functionaries” sitting at a table gorging themselves (Illustration 5.5). The text below, written as a satirical poem, portrayed the two SPD leaders as indifferent to the real conditions of West Germans. Instead, they were willing to attack Erhard’s economic policy for their own political gain, even though they enjoyed the very benefits of that policy.

The CDU/CSU’s attacks on the SPD proved effective. After the election, the *Bundesgeschäftsstelle* sent out questionnaires to all of the district party organizations inquiring about their propaganda’s effectiveness and the how well organized the campaign had been. This leaflet, along with the poster “All roads of Marxism lead to Moscow,” were reported by district-level CDU/CSU organizations to be extremely effective, resonating deeply with the population.⁹⁹ Taken as a whole, the CDU/CSU’s propaganda captured the spirit of the times and the overall mood and fears of the electorate. The events of the summer of 1953 heightened the perceived threat from the Soviet Union. In July 1952 an Institut für Demoskopie survey indicated that 66 percent of West Germans felt threatened by the Soviet Union. Although there are no surveys that pursue this question into the summer of 1953, undoubtedly this sentiment remained high, especially after the 17 June uprising. In September 1955, 56 percent of West Germans believed that the Russians still wanted to make Germany communist.¹⁰⁰ But perhaps more importantly, the CDU/CSU had created a coherent theme for their campaign. Economic reconstruction, the SPD’s unreliability, and the threat of communism were fused together to demonstrate to West Germans the need to stay the course.

In the 1953 election campaign not only did the CDU/CSU take credit for West Germany’s economic upswing and link it to the party’s foreign policy, but economic propaganda increasingly focused upon the idea that reconstruction and economic success were a source of national identity and central to the legitimacy of the newly formed Federal Republic of Germany. The functioning of individual men and women within the free market was represented not only as satisfying individual needs or desires, but also as an essential element in the creation of the new West German state. As the CDU/CSU politician who spoke for the con-



Illustration 5.5 Conversations on the left

sumer, Ludwig Erhard took center stage in marketing this ideology to West Germans—particularly to women voters. A year prior to the election, in a 28 June 1952 speech opening the exhibition of “Die Wirtschaft im Dienst der Hausfrau” (The Economy in Service of the Housewife), in Frankfurt, Erhard clearly articulated

the importance of economics in a free society. Addressing a mostly female crowd, Erhard proclaimed that “[t]he mass of consumers is the judge of the economy as well as the economic system. . . . This economic system has given back to you the first, the most basic, but also the most important right of a democratic system, that is the free choice of consumption.”¹⁰¹ From Erhard’s perspective, women controlled the crucial element in democracy—the freedom to consume—and were consequently positioned as the key upholders of the newly formed Federal Republic. For Erhard, consumer choice not only defined the West German democracy, it set West Germany apart from both its eastern counterpart and the Nazi past.¹⁰²

This conception of economic gender roles played itself out in the political arena as revealed by the CDU/CSU’s electoral propaganda. In the last days before the election, the CDU/CSU distributed a letter from Erhard addressed to housewives all over West Germany—a distribution totaling 5,280,000.¹⁰³ The letter opened with: “You know what it means to be an economics minister. No one else is so entrusted with the troubles and anxiety of keeping house. As the economics minister of your family it is not much different for you as for me, the Federal Economics Minister.” Erhard went on to explain that housewives’ challenges, such as making ends meet, taking care of purchases, and keeping the house in order, resembled the problems the economics minister faced. The letter finally connected the public and political implications of women’s private role as the “economics ministers of the household.” Erhard outlined the substantial material improvements achieved in West Germany since the 1948 currency reform and warned women that the gains from the previous five years could be lost by failing to vote correctly in the upcoming election. The letter concluded with the words, “Help me to remove this danger, before it is too late. In the din of the election, do not follow a voice [a clever pun since *Stimme* can also mean “vote”] other than your conscience as the economics minister of your family.”

As he had done on other occasions, Erhard spoke in the letter not as a political representative of the CDU/CSU, but rather as a Federal Republic cabinet member. Erhard’s appeal helped create a gendered sense of the government and civic duty by suggesting that women possessed a special insight into political and economic developments. With their experience and knowledge in making daily economic decisions within the private sphere, women had a role that paralleled Erhard’s public role in the federal government. By making the correct decisions in consumption, women were strengthening the newly founded West German democracy. This knowledge demanded that they exert what was defined as their civic duty of voting for the CDU/CSU. Yet in no way did the letter hint that women should extend their political influence beyond their very clearly delineated realm within the home and at the ballot box.

Economic production and consumerist prosperity were means by which West Germany’s Cold War rivalry with East Germany was carried out, and propaganda regarding this issue was also constructed in a specifically gendered context. In Erhard’s letter to housewives, one means of legitimizing the Federal Republic of

Germany was to compare its economic development with that of East Germany. Erhard asserted that those who had doubted the social market economy in 1948/49 and supported the planned economy only had to remember the “sparrow portions” of food available at the time and look to the “perfectly terrible conditions of our sisters and brothers in the East” to appreciate that West Germany had pursued the correct path and constituted, in fact, the legitimate Germany.¹⁰⁴

In contrast to the 1949 campaign, in 1953 the CDU/CSU enjoyed the luxury of propaganda campaigns running parallel to its own. Perhaps having a wider reach than the propaganda generated by organizations affiliated with the Federal Press Agency, *Die Waage*, the business-funded organization advertising the social market economy, geared up its efforts for the upcoming Bundestag election.¹⁰⁵ While much of the CDU/CSU’s 1953 propaganda concentrated on foreign policy issues, *Die Waage* exploited the growth of the West German economy to lend support to the “bourgeois” parties, with Economic Minister Ludwig Erhard assuming a pivotal role in the campaign. *Die Waage*’s advertisements echoed and reaffirmed the CDU/CSU’s vision of the social market economy and the economic miracle—both with regard to the SPD’s dangerous connection to developments in the East and in a gendered understanding of economic reconstruction. In addition, by extensively utilizing public opinion surveys and contracting a professional advertising agent to shape its campaign, *Die Waage*, if anything, was even out ahead of the CDU/CSU in the application of modern public relations techniques.

As an organization representing private business, rather than any particular political party, *Die Waage* had a difficult time formulating its advertisements in a way the contributors found acceptable. In non-election years its campaigns focused on strengthening support for the social market economy, improving labor-management relations, and promoting social tranquility in West Germany. In election years, however, the circumstances were decidedly different. Early in 1953 *Die Waage*’s executive board decided its advertisements should emphasize “Erhard’s social market economy” rather than merely the “social market economy,” because surveys from the Institut für Demoskopie had indicated the danger that some readers would associate the social market economy” with the SPD due to the inclusion of the word “social.” For that reason, *Die Waage* decided to personify the social market economy with Erhard in its advertisements prior to the Bundestag election.¹⁰⁶

But this route created more problems. Most of *Die Waage*’s earlier advertising had stressed more abstract economic ideas or promoted peaceful industrial relations by depicting the rising prosperity enjoyed by West Germans. Some contributors were concerned that an emphasis upon Erhard would naturally lend support to the CDU/CSU, at the expense of smaller bourgeois parties. *Die Waage*’s advertising agent, Hanns Brose, suggested that one of its pre-election posters proclaim, “We’re casting our votes with one of the parties that stand for Ludwig Erhard’s policy of the social market economy: CDU/CSU, DP, FDP.”¹⁰⁷ *Die Waage*’s executive board vehemently rejected this in favor of focusing upon Erhard and not mentioning any particular political party. This controversy illustrated a fundamental problem facing *Die Waage*. Its contributors were a varied group of indus-

trialists and entrepreneurs who wanted to promote the social market economy and avoid the election of a SPD-led coalition, but did not necessarily want to support the CDU/CSU explicitly. At the same time the organization was closely aligned with Economics Minister Erhard—a leading political figure in the party. In non-election years this conflict could be avoided because Erhard's party allegiance was secondary to his support of the social market economy. But this dilemma came to the fore in 1953.

Leading up to the election, Die Waage geared up its fundraising efforts in order to support its public relations efforts for the campaign. In March 1953, Die Waage's executive board sent out 30,000 letters across the Federal Republic asking for donations. They also planned for Erhard to contact the leadership of larger firms, such as Volkswagen and Siemens, more directly through personal letters.¹⁰⁸ The letters sent to prospective donors explained that DM 2.5 million was needed for Die Waage's upcoming action.¹⁰⁹ Overall, Die Waage expended about DM 3.78 million in the 1952/53 campaigns, including about DM 3 million on magazine and newspaper advertisements, a considerable sum given that the entire SPD, including local, regional and national level organizations, spent about DM 3.5 million on its 1953 campaign.¹¹⁰ With this sum, Die Waage produced four major advertising series between November 1952 and September 1953, two of which ran during the summer runup to the election. These two series featured eight different ads that appeared in over 450 magazines and newspapers with a total circulation of almost 20 million. In addition, Die Waage distributed two different posters and three films—which were generally short enactments of the ads.¹¹¹

On 5 September 1953, the day before the election, Die Waage published its final campaign advertisement. It presented a stereotypical view of Erhard, with a slight smile and his trademark cigar in his mouth (Illustration 5.6) and a slogan that read “Wohlstand Aus Eigener Kraft” (Prosperity from one's own efforts). Erhard figured prominently in the text: “Professor Dr. Ludwig Erhard, responsible for the German economy, stands before us. He has achieved something decisive for us.” The text recounted the dramatic rise of the West German economy, comparing living conditions in 1948 with 1953. On the day of the currency reform, it was Erhard who did away with the ration cards of the controlled economy. The end of the text proclaimed: “Not all of the wounds from the war have healed. Not all of the dangers threatening our economic health have been averted. It is a matter of securing our peaceful reconstruction and tomorrow we'll give our vote to a party which stands by ERHARD'S SOCIAL MARKET ECONOMY.” Although giving the credit for West Germany's economic boom to the social market economy, and not the CDU/CSU, the advertisement clearly dovetailed tidily with the party's emphasis on personalities and achievements. In addition, without mentioning the SPD it implicitly castigated that party as a danger to the progress West Germany had achieved. The advertisement built upon earlier campaigns that identified Erhard as the linchpin in West Germany's economic success. In many respects Die Waage was at the forefront of public relations efforts directly associating the economic miracle with the personality of Ludwig Erhard, despite some



WOHLSTAND AUS EIGENER KRAFT

Seit fünf Jahren wächst und erstarkt die deutsche Wirtschaft, so rasch, daß die Welt erstaunt. Am eigenen Leib, an Kleid und Nahrung, hat's jeder von uns erfahren. Verantwortlich für die deutsche Wirtschaft steht vor uns Professor Dr. Ludwig Erhard. Er hat für uns Entscheidendes geleistet.

1948 Ein zerstörtes Land, ein durch Hunger geschwächtes Volk, eine zerrüttete Währung. Ehrliche Arbeit hatte ihren Sinn verloren.

Mit schnellem Entschluß zerreißt Ludwig Erhard am Tage der Währungsreform die Karten und Bezugscheine der Zwangswirtschaft.

Seine Ideen feuern die Wirtschaft an: Zeige jeder, was er kann! Sicherheit des Daseins soll jeder aus sich selbst, aus seiner schöpferischen Arbeit gewinnen.

Professor Erhard verkündet: Nur ein freier Wettbewerb steigert die Produktion und die Qualität unserer Erzeugnisse. Nur harte Konkurrenz, nicht Polizei und Schnellgerichte, drücken die Preise und erhöhen die Kaufkraft des Geldes. Wir schaffen Arbeit, nicht durch Inflation, sondern durch Aufbau. Nur wenn soziale Gesinnung und persönliches Leistungsstreben sich vereinigen, können wir dauerndem Wohlstand entgegengehen.

1953 Fünf Jahre harter Arbeit liegen hinter uns, aber sie waren nicht vergeblich.

Das graue Gespenst der Arbeitslosigkeit wurde gebannt. Fast drei Millionen neue Arbeitsplätze wurden geschaffen.

Wohnungen für über 5 Millionen Menschen wurden gebaut. Unerbittlich wacht Erhard über den festen Wert des Geldes.

Die D-Mark ist heute so kerngesund wie der Dollar und der Schweizer Franken. Der deutsche Export, ohne den wir hungern müßten, ist in vier Jahren um das Siebenfache gestiegen.

Wir verfügen über 6 Milliarden D-Mark an Gold und Devisen. In Deutschland ist der Mensch nicht verstaatlicht, sondern Staat und Wirtschaft sind dem Menschen dienstbar gemacht worden!

Das ist der »betrügerische Bankrott«, der Ludwig Erhard von seinen Gegnern vorausgesagt wurde. Aber er weiß, daß er längst die überwältigende Mehrheit des Volkes hinter sich hat.

Auch heute sind noch nicht alle Wunden geheilt, die der Krieg geschlagen hat, nicht alle Gefahren gebannt, die unsere wirtschaftliche Gesundheit bedrohen. Deshalb gilt es, unseren friedlichen Wiederaufbau zu sichern und morgen unsere Stimme einer der Parteien zu geben, die sich bekennen zu

Illustration 5.6 Prosperity from one's own efforts

contributors' objections to supporting a political figure. His appearance on the cover of *Der Spiegel*, accompanied by a six-page article published just prior to the election, attested to Erhard's growing popularity.

The article typified the image that industrialists, journalists, and politicians had built around Erhard. Like Die Waage's advertisements, the cover depicted Erhard smoking his trademark cigar with the caption "There is no German miracle." Economic prosperity, the article explained, was based upon good ideas, proper policies, and hard work. The article identified Erhard with the qualities that many West Germans envisioned him possessing: optimism, decisiveness, a belief in his policies, and a connectedness with the common citizen. The article recounted many of Erhard's actions that had become almost legendary in West Germany—especially the story of how he had "audaciously" ended many of the economic controls and the rationing of many consumer goods after the currency reform of June 1948. He stuck to his guns by retorting to General Clay's and the American military government's accusations that the rationing regulations had been changed without the proper authority, that "I have not changed them. I have rescinded them." Erhard, the article explained, possessed an uncanny ability to predict the future course of the economy, such as when he proclaimed that consumer goods prices would fall after the initial wave of post-currency reform inflation. As the text explained, "that was the first in a series of predictions, whose most mysteriously exact fulfillment gave to the economist Erhard an odor [*Odeur*] of which every African medicine man would be envious." But most importantly, Erhard was portrayed as the consumer's main defender. As the article opened, Erhard was becoming irate with a waiter, accusing him of unfair profiteering when he informed Erhard that the price of a cup of coffee would sink only 5 pfennig after an upcoming Erhard-engineered tax reduction. The article also related how Erhard was always quizzing his secretary about the availability and price of goods for ordinary consumers.¹¹² This rising popularity was reflected in the polls. Back in May 1951, in the midst of the Korean Crisis, only 14 percent of respondents held a good opinion of Erhard, against 49 percent who recorded a poor opinion. By May 1953, 37 percent had a good opinion of him. This figure had grown to 50 percent by May 1956.¹¹³

In addition, although they were planned independently of the CDU/CSU, Die Waage's advertisements not only jibed well with the party's blurring of the boundaries separating socialist planning in East Germany and the SPD in West Germany, but also they used the social market economy as a means of defining West German legitimacy itself. One advertisement appearing before the election asked, "Would we earn more if . . ." (Illustration 5.7). The advertisement depicted Fritz and Otto, the two working-class characters who had been developed in early 1953, lounging on a hill smoking cigarettes; standing in the background is a motorbike, symbolizing West Germany's rising prosperity. Creating a scene in which the reader is invited to share in what appears to be personal discussion, Fritz and Otto debated the advantages of the free market versus the planned economy. When the puzzled Otto, representing the undecided voter, suggested to the "wise"



Würden wir mehr verdienen, wenn ...

Mein Name ist OTTO,  und das ist FRITZ,  - der ist ein klarer Kopf, mit dem läßt sich reden. Wir treffen uns hin und wieder und bringen die Welt in Ordnung.

Fritz: Na, Otto – schöner Sonntag heute – und auch wieder ganz nett verdient, diese Woche, was?

Otto: Na ja, ganz ordentlich. Aber, Fritz, wenn ich daran denke, was wir erst verdienen würden, wenn die Betriebe in Gemeineigentum übergeführt wären und alles von oben geplant wird.

Fritz: So – Du meinst, wir würden dann mehr verdienen?

Otto: Klar! Kannst Du denn nicht weiter denken? Stell Dir mal vor, dann gibt's keine privaten Unternehmer mehr, die den Gewinn einfach so einstecken.

Fritz: Dafür steckt dann Vater Staat als Unternehmer die Gewinne ein.

Otto: Warum denn nicht, Fritz, dann kommen sie doch wenigstens uns Arbeitern und Angestellten zugute.

Fritz: Denkste! Was hat denn der einzelne Arbeiter in den Ländern davon, wo die sozialistische Planwirtschaft alles »verplant« hat?

Otto: Aber in der Planwirtschaft ist jedenfalls der Staat der Chef.

Fritz: Der Staat der Chef ... also würde zunächst mal unser Chef verschwinden. Dafür käme ein Staatsdirektor. Dein Lohn würde von oben festgesetzt und die Preise würden von oben befohlen ...

Otto: Na, warum nicht?

Fritz: ... aber natürlich auch die Auswahl und die Art und Qualität der angebotenen Ware: deutscher Einheitsanzug, für Deine Frau ein Einheitskleid, Farbe grau. Schluß! Mehr braucht man ja auch nicht zum Leben, wie? Alles wird zugeteilt, und Du mußt nehmen, was gerade da ist.

Otto: Nun hör' aber auf, Fritz, das wäre ja die reinste Kasernenwirtschaft! Und Du wirst nun natürlich wieder sagen, daß ERHARDS SOZIALE MARKTWIRTSCHAFT für uns das einzig richtige ist.

Fritz: Genau das, mein Lieber. Aber Du kannst ja selbst entscheiden, ob die heutige Form unserer Wirtschaft erhalten und von Jahr zu Jahr verbessert wird, oder ob das kommen soll, was Du selbst »Kasernenwirtschaft« nennst.

Entscheide selbst: entweder das gefährliche Experiment der Planwirtschaft – oder weiterhin Fortschritt und Erhöhung unseres Lebensstandards durch ERHARDS SOZIALE MARKTWIRTSCHAFT.



DIE WAAGE

Gemeinschaft zur Förderung des Sozialen Ausgleichs e.V.
Vorsitz: Franz Greiss - Köln am Rhein - Unter Sachsenhausen 14-26

Illustration 5.7 Would we earn more if ...

Fritz that workers and employees would be better off in a planned economy Fritz reacted strongly. "You think so?" Fritz asked, "What then does the individual worker have in countries where the socialist planned economy has planned everything?" Every aspect of the economy would be planned from above and the availability of goods would be limited. One would get only "a standardized German suit, for your wife, a standardized dress, color gray." No explanation was needed

as to which country he meant. From a Cold War perspective, the advertisement clearly blended the distinction between the SPD's policies in West Germany and the SED in communist East Germany. The two were identified as seeking the same policies, and the advertisement implied that the West German worker would secure the same results. Only weeks after the Soviet tanks crushed the 17 June worker protest calling for more consumer goods, this advertisement provided a strong message. The advertisement, playing off the West German sense of anxiety regarding both geopolitics and economics, concluded with: "Decide yourself: either the dangerous experiment of the planned economy—or continued progress and the increase of our standard of living through Erhard's social market economy."

In one of its last advertisements before the election, Die Waage declared that "The people have the last word" in another dialogue advertisement featuring Fritz and Otto (Illustration 5.8). The advertisement, based on the original Fritz and Otto test ad, depicted the characters in a "*Stammkneipe*," or their local bar, listening to Erhard on the radio—creating the sense, as in other Fritz and Otto ads, that the reader was invited into the characters' inner circle of space. All eyes in the bar looked intently at the radio, as if hanging on the minister's every word. Clearly the context of the advertisement suggested that they were listening to one of his campaign broadcasts, thereby injecting Erhard's spirit into the advertisement, despite his physical absence. By stressing that the "people have the last word," the association of radio with that Nazi propaganda that had spewed out of Goebbels' "*Volksempfänger*" (people's receiver) in the Third Reich was replaced with the idea that Fritz and Otto (and implicitly the readers) were participating in another episode of Erhard's and the voters' ongoing "discussion."¹¹⁴ In the ad's opening, Erhard proclaimed that one of his tasks was to give the German people courage and confidence. By claiming that certain unnamed elements desired to push the German people into doubt and worry, Erhard was clearly referring to the SPD campaign propaganda and the DGB's recent denunciations of the social market economy. "They want these hard-working people never to become satisfied in their lives," Erhard argued. At this point Erhard's speech trailed off to Fritz and Otto's dialogue.

In this context, Otto, who throughout the series represented the undecided voter, now agreed with Erhard. Both Fritz and Otto were convinced that much had been accomplished since the war, both by workers and industrialists. "But we are not over the hump, and the troublemakers are stirring things up," Otto explained. It was easy for such "troublemakers" to talk, since they did not have to shoulder any responsibility. Moreover, as Fritz added, they can promise "everything under the sun" (*Blaue von Himmel*)—an attempt to undermine the SPD's attacks against the Adenauer government. The text led the reader to two choices: "State controlled economy of the functionaries—or progress in freedom and further improvement of our living standards through our economic system, tested in the most difficult times, through Erhard's social market economy." The message was the same: the SPD was composed of "functionaries" who were more interested in ideology than the welfare of Germans. The bourgeois interests were send-



Das Volk hat das letzte Wort

«... Eine meiner Aufgaben ist, dem deutschen Volk Mut und Zuversicht zu geben. Denn es sind zu viele am Werk, das deutsche Volk wieder in Verzweiflung und Lebensangst zu treiben! Sie wollen, daß dieses arbeitsame Volk nur ja keinen Tag seines Lebens froh werde...»

Otto: Da ist viel Wahres dran. Ich weiß auch, wen der Wirtschaftsminister Erhard meint. Unsereins möchte in Frieden schaffen und vorwärtskommen. Aber dazu gehört Verständigung und Zusammenarbeit.

Fritz: Otto, jetzt hast Du den Nagel auf den Kopf getroffen. Aber ich sage Dir: Wer die einmalige Leistung unseres wirtschaftlichen Wiederaufbaus nach dem Krieg – diese Gemeinschaftsleistung der deutschen Arbeiter und Unternehmer – heute zu verkleinern sucht, der meint's nicht gut mit unserem Volk!

Otto: Hast recht. Aber wir sind eben noch nicht ganz über den Berg, und da haken die Unruhestifter ein.

Fritz: Und das nenne ich von Grund aus unehrlich!

Otto: Wer nicht selbst Verantwortung trägt, hat eben leicht reden –

Fritz: – und verspricht das Blaue vom Himmel. Aber nach dem Krieg ging es ums Zupacken: Enttrümmern, Arbeitsplätze und Wohnungen schaffen, dem Geld wieder Wert geben – immer mehr, besser und billiger produzieren.

Otto: Wir haben ja dann auch das Menschenmögliche getan –

Fritz: – und haben es in vier Jahren dahin gebracht, daß die deutsche Lebenshaltung wieder zu den höchsten in Europa gehört! So viel haben wir durch Erhard's Politik der SOZIALEN MARKTWIRTSCHAFT erreicht – und zum Dank soll sein Werk wieder zertrümmert werden?

Otto: Nein, Fritz. Dazu haben nicht ein paar Unruhestifter, sondern wir, das Volk, das letzte Wort zu sagen.

Vor uns liegt die Entscheidung: Staatliche Zwangswirtschaft der Funktionäre – oder Fortschritt in Freiheit und weitere Hebung unseres Lebensstandards durch unsere in schwerster Zeit erprobte Wirtschaftsordnung, durch ERHARDS SOZIALE MARKTWIRTSCHAFT!


DIE WAAGE
 Gemeinschaft zur Förderung des Sozialen Ausgleichs e.V.
 Vorsitz: Franz Greiss · Köln am Rhein · Unter Sachsenhausen 14-26

Illustration 5.8 The people have the last word

ing a clear message: they were beyond ideology and concerned only with concrete results.

The advertisements identified the 1948 currency reform and the introduction of the social market economy as crucial turning points in the fates of both char-

acters and West Germany itself. Fritz and Otto could reassert their proper roles as men because the new economic order gave back to them their ability to earn a wage. In one advertisement celebrating the five-year anniversary of the introduction of the Deutsche Mark, Otto dismissed the whole currency reform as a mere “fraud.” Fritz responded incredulously, “Would you rather return to the time of the controlled and planned economy when we worked only for calories, home-grown tobacco [*Siedlerstolz*], and shoddy goods?” The social market economy had pulled Fritz and Otto out of the bad times. It was Erhard who “brought production and buying power back into balance and helped us all to work again, to buy, and to consume.” The return of a stable currency had restored meaning back to these men’s lives by giving them the ability to work and produce. Thus the advertisements aimed to show how workers such as Fritz and Otto had benefited concretely from the introduction of the free market, and in fact, become more middle class, as seen by the portrayal of Fritz in more middle-class clothing, by his efforts to buy a house in subsequent advertisements, and by Fritz and Otto’s more management-friendly views of labor relations. The underlying message was that their hard work and Erhard’s social market economy had ensured “progress and social peace.”

Not surprisingly, an initial test survey showed the Fritz and Otto series as less effective with female than male readers. Women, for instance, were more likely to believe either that the doubting Otto was correct or that each character was right in his own way—a perception *Die Waage* did not want to create. In addition, women were less likely to grasp the main point of the advertisement. In general, the survey indicated that women were not interested in abstract ideas about the economy.¹¹⁵ In response, *Die Waage* began developing new advertisements geared to a female audience, with an early example appearing just prior to the second Bundestag election in the fall of 1953 (Illustration 5.9). The advertisement’s slogan proclaimed, “We women have forgotten nothing, and furthermore have learned a thing or two.” By addressing the reader in the first person plural, *Die Waage* hoped to get women to identify with a common female experience—similar to what been achieved in the text of the CDU/CSU’s illustrated magazine, *Die Entscheidung*. The ad opened with, “Really, is it already five years ago that we began to lead an existence worthy of humanity?” It continued with recollections from the immediate postwar years, most notably women’s experience as “continually overtired, undernourished, perpetually standing in lines,” along with treks to the countryside in search of food to feed their families.

As in the Fritz and Otto series, this advertisement pointed to the currency reform of 1948 as the turning point for women’s experience. With the currency reform women could now become “normal housewives.” Suddenly they had been transformed from “ration card holders” into valued customers. Once the shelves were suddenly filled with goods, the pain of the early postwar years was swept away: “Can a man at all understand, what this change immediately meant for us women, who had suffered most bitterly under conditions that not only broke the remainder of our self confidence, but also brought us to the brink of total despair

WIR FRAUEN haben nichts vergessen und immerhin einiges dazugelernt



Pfund Brot in der Woche! Damit sollten wir heranwachsende Kinder, einen Mann, der zur Arbeit ging, ernähren.

O, es war alles großartig organisiert und -bewirtschaftet. Das waren die Jahre, in denen unser Leben nur noch aus »Anstehen« bestand. Und dann gab es noch die nichtlichen Fahrten quer durch Deutschland in überfüllten Waggons ohne Fenster, auf dem Trittbrett oder der Plattform der Züge, um einen Rucksack voll Kartoffeln, ein paar Pfund Obst heimzubringen - wenn man Glück hatte und am Bahnhof nicht erwischt wurde.

Dann kam die Währungsreform, und es kam die SOZIALE MARKTWIRTSCHAFT. Beinahe nicht zu fassen für uns körperlich und seelisch zermürbte Hausfrauen! Über Nacht sozusagen wurden wir plötzlich von den mühsamen »Bezugsberechtigten« zu geschätzten Kundinnen. Sehr geschätzten, unworbe-

Wirklich, sind es erst fünf Jahre her, daß wir anfangen, ein menschenwürdiges Dasein zu führen? Daß wir von fraurigen, ständig übermüdeten, unterernährten, ewig hinter etwas herjagenden Schlangensteherrinnen zu normalen Hausfrauen wurden, die wieder planen, rechnen und ganz nach Belieben einkaufen können? Das heißt, normal waren wir damals auch. Das wurde uns sogar, behördlich abgestempelt, bescheinigt. Außerordentlich arbeitsame, planmäßig gelenkte »Normal«-verbraucher. Ein herrlicher Zustand war das!

Erinnern Sie sich noch? Das war die Zeit, in der die Kalorien auf 800 angekommen waren und unser Lebensmut auf dem Nullpunkt. Wir jonglierten mit 7 g Fett, 10 g Zucker und 20 g Fleisch wie ein Seiltänzer über dem Abgrund des Hungers und der Kälte. Zwei



nen und zuvorkommend bedienten Kundinnen. Es war wie ein Wunder! Die Regale füllten sich mit Dingen, die unsere Kinder kaum dem Namen nach kannten. Unser Geld hatte wieder Wert. Wir konnten wieder kaufen, wo wir wollten und was wir wollten. Und wenn wir auch manchmal knapp bei Kasse waren, na ja, wir hatten doch selbst für den geringsten Betrag wieder die Möglichkeit zu wählen, selbst zu entscheiden und abzulehnen, was uns nicht gefiel. Es war, als ob ein Tor in die Freiheit sich aufgetan hätte. Die Welt wurde heller, das Leben wieder lebenswert.

Kann ein Mann uns überhaupt nachfühlen, was dieser Wandel gerade für uns Frauen bedeutete, die wir am bittersten unter einem Zustand gelitten hatten, der nicht nur die letzten Reste unseres Selbstbewußtseins zer-



brochen, sondern der uns auch angesichts der bittenden Augen unserer Kinder an den Rand der Verzweiflung gebracht hatte? Das noch einmal erleben? Der Himmel bewahre uns davor. Wer einmal mitgemacht hat, was »Planwirtschaft« bedeutet, ist für immer kuriert. Wir wollen uns nicht mehr die Ertragsenschaften der SOZIALEN MARKTWIRTSCHAFT wegnehmen lassen. Wir wissen heute, welch unwahrscheinlichen Aufschwung wir ihr in den wenigen Jahren verdanken. Wir wissen, daß nur im freien Spiel der Kräfte, im Wechsel zwischen Angebot und Nachfrage, die Hausfrau ein Faktor ist, mit dem man rechnen muß.

Und man soll mit uns rechnen. Man kann es auch. Wir Frauen sind uns klar darüber, daß diese oft kritisierte, von gewisser Seite oft angefeindete SOZIALE MARKTWIRTSCHAFT der einzige Weg ist, der uns Schritt für Schritt einer besseren Zukunft entgegenführt.

Man verschone uns daher mit Phrasen. Wir haben beides am eigenen Leibe erlebt - Planwirtschaft und Soziale Marktwirtschaft. Wir Frauen haben uns entschieden - für

ERHARDS
SOZIALE MARKTWIRTSCHAFT

DIE WAAGE



Gemeinschaft zur Förderung
des Sozialen Ausgleichs e.V.

Vorsitz: Franz Greiss

Köln am Rhein - Unter Sachsenhausen 14-26



Illustration 5.9 We women have forgotten nothing, and furthermore have learned a thing or two

having to view the begging eyes of our children?" The advertisement linked economic development with what was portrayed as a fundamental source of identity for a woman: the role of housewife, mother and nurturer of children, and consumer. Harking back to some of the themes of the CDU/CSU campaign, especially Erhard's letter to housewives, the availability of consumer goods did not just satisfy personal needs or desires but allowed women to perform their "nat-

ural” domestic roles. The economic dislocations of the postwar years had cast these roles into doubt, or at least had undermined women’s ability to perform these functions fully. The advertisement, like some of the posters from the 1949 election campaign, implied that women became more feminine when they regained their domestic duties. As with the Fritz and Otto advertisements, the underlying message was that difficult times were associated with the “planned economy” when ration cards were used, while economic rebirth and reconstruction of a properly functioning society were connected with the introduction of the social market economy. It was thus in defense of this conception of femininity that: “We women have decided—for ERHARD’S SOCIAL MARKET ECONOMY.”

In using varied strategies tailored to women and men, Die Waage constructed different meanings of the social market economy and the economic miracle. Although the Fritz and Otto advertisements did not incorporate many abstract ideas on the economy because Die Waage’s board sought concrete examples of improvements resulting from the social market economy, they did try to impart to men some sort of basic knowledge of how the economy works, including discussions on inflation, the determination of a currency’s value, and the importance of exports for West Germany. Despite using more slang, the Fritz and Otto advertisements also were somewhat preachy and didactic. In contrast, advertisements directed toward a female audience tended to go directly to personal experiences particular to women, as opposed to more general and abstract ideas about economics. However, advertisements for both men and women clearly linked their private actions as producers and consumers to public conceptions of the legitimacy and strength of the Federal Republic itself and the effectiveness of the social market economy. Indeed, the advertisements defined their economic roles as their primary civic duties: to produce and to consume was to take part in creating the new Federal Republic and to erase all vestiges of the recent past.

These strategies for male and female readers were perhaps best illustrated through a set of brochures available by mail to readers of Die Waage’s advertisements. The most widely circulated booklet appealing to men, “Steigende Produktivität, wachsender Wohlstand” (Increasing Productivity, Growing Prosperity), gave a short lesson on free market economics. It addressed the importance of raising production so that prosperity for all could be achieved. Increased production, the pamphlet proclaimed, meant “the end of class struggle,” and would “make life worth living.” The brochure for women, entitled *Lieber Leserin . . .* (Dear [female] Reader . . .), took a different tack. It explained that “[i]n the social market economy, women have a special mission. Since 80 percent of the pay is managed by women, it can be said: All of economic development is determined in large part by women.” Again, women’s importance in the economy was not defined by their function in the economy through production, but rather through their role as consumers in what were considered their natural domestic duties of child rearing and purchasing consumer goods for the family.

Taken together, during the 1953 campaign Die Waage and the CDU/CSU effectively portrayed the rising level of consumption in West Germany to get Ade-

nauer's government reelected. They both utilized Cold War tensions to raise doubts about the SPD's capacity to govern. In addition, they expressed the civic values of economic reconstruction in clearly gendered terms. For men, the strong West German economy reaffirmed their masculine role as strong producers able to provide for their families. Their nation's and their own fates were interlinked. For women, economic growth and the ability to take care of the consumption needs in the private sphere underscored the legitimacy of West Germany as a whole. The CDU/CSU and Die Waage thus offered a sense of personal and national identity rooted in a gendered understanding of the economy that proved highly effective with the electorate.

There are undoubtedly parallels between the CDU/CSU's campaign techniques and those used in the Weimar Republic, particularly by the Nazis during their rise to power.¹¹⁶ First, like the Nazis, the CDU/CSU sought to become a *Volkspartei* that crossed the traditional social, religious, and regional divisions that plagued German politics from the middle of the nineteenth century through the demise of the Weimar Republic. Both parties' propaganda evoked the idea of regenerating a sense of Germanness, be it a racial *Volksgemeinschaft* in the Third Reich or a productive/consumerist community in West Germany, meant to unify the nation across traditional social and cultural divisions. At the same time they both created a polarizing wedge between themselves and those outside their vision of the German community—especially against Marxists—and they portrayed themselves as protecting the nation from the Marxist threat from within and without. Second, Nazi and often times early CDU/CSU propaganda was characterized by over-the-top accusations, slander, and emotional appeals in attempts to move the amorphous masses by psychological means. This was accomplished within the context of a highly organized and effective propaganda machine that was centrally directed but allowed for more grassroots initiatives according to the prerogatives of the local population.¹¹⁷

Adolf Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggle*) that the rational abilities of the masses were quite lacking and that all effective propaganda must "be limited to a few points and must harp on these in slogans, until the last member of the public understands what you want him to understand." Josef Goebbels, the Nazi Party's propaganda leader beginning in 1930 and the minister of public enlightenment within the Third Reich, echoed Hitler's views in his notion that propaganda had to be simple, repetitive, and often symbolic.¹¹⁸ Although the CDU/CSU's propaganda was clearly more muted than the Nazis', Adenauer reflected a similar philosophy in 1949 when he spoke of reaching the "primitive" levels of society and argued that propaganda "must speak simply to the public, not too much, few thoughts, large ideas simply represented"—an approach most notably illustrated by CDU/CSU posters such as the hovering Mongol face from the 1949 campaign and the "All roads of Marxism lead to Moscow" from 1953.¹¹⁹ Ultimately, their propaganda did not attempt to rationally engage the public about specific ideas, but sought to attract attention emotionally and to pound the public with the parties' ideological views.

Third, in order to reach the broadest markets, both parties borrowed heavily from commercial advertising to modernize their political propaganda. They both saw themselves as selling a political product to the electorate on a mass market scale. Josef Goebbels commented in a 1930 essay on National Socialism and modern political propaganda that “we shall utilize the most modern advertising means in service of our movement” and wanted local Nazi propaganda offices to study commercial advertising methods and apply them in the party’s electoral campaigns.¹²⁰ Clearly all political parties during the Weimar Republic were influenced by commercial advertising, but by virtue of their extensive use of symbols and logos, such as the swastika, continuously repeated slogans, and attempts to influence “opinion makers” in society, the Nazi propaganda methods were the most up-to-date. As Sabine Behrenbeck has suggested, after 1930 the focus on the “*Führerkult*” around Hitler could be seen as a key aspect of creating a brand name reflecting the “corporate identity” of the Nazi Party through the same means used in commercial advertising. A strikingly similar phenomenon was emerging in 1953, as the CDU/CSU emphasized its leadership, and in particular Adenauer, who functioned as a brand name for the party symbolizing its character and themes of stability, security, and reconstruction.¹²¹ This approach would only be intensified in the 1957 campaign.

There were, however, important differences in the experiences of the two parties. By 1953 the CDU/CSU campaign was lessening the importance in its propaganda, especially its graphic media, of appeals characterized solely by emotional, evocative, and symbolic associations that sought to release inner psychological desires of the masses. In this regard, the Nazi and earlier CDU/CSU posters reflected longer-term traditions in European poster art.¹²² During the 1953 campaign, armed with more precise public opinion and sociological data, tools that the Nazis lacked, the CDU/CSU began to transform its propaganda techniques based upon more American-style public relations and advertising—especially in print advertisements and party-illustrated magazines. European advertising traditions dictated a focus upon selling the aesthetic and emotive qualities of the “*Ding an sich*” (thing in itself), such as Hitler in the case of the Nazis. But now, the CDU/CSU’s propaganda efforts, and those of like-minded groups such as Die Waage, became concerned with the views of the individual voter and sought to enter into a discussion with that voter on what benefits the party offered within a clear social context. Both approaches are ultimately manipulative, but the method centered more upon the “two-way concept” resulted in less heavy-handed and more sophisticated propaganda that sought to work on the reader both rationally and emotionally.

Both Goebbels and Hans Domizlaff, the German advertising giant of the first half of the twentieth century, drew heavily from the work of the French sociologist Gustave Le Bon on the irrationality, gullibility, and unconscious malleability of the crowd as a guide for influencing the amorphous masses in political and advertising campaigns.¹²³ In contrast, a CDU/CSU after-report on the 1953 campaign commented that Le Bon’s view of the masses no longer had validity because

he viewed public opinion as simply too irrational. Instead, from the CDU/CSU's perspective, public opinion was more complicated, yet also more knowable using the right tools. It was a function of religious beliefs, worldviews, family and national circumstances, and historical development intersecting with a particular, present social situation. Therefore, within this complicated social situation, the report concluded, the executive committee of the CDU/CSU and the Federal Press Agency used public opinion surveys to determine which issues possessed particular importance for voters in the campaign. It was upon these responses that the party based its campaign.¹²⁴ The CDU/CSU increasingly took into account a pluralistic society whose individual members had to be understood and more carefully spoken to, resulting in more receiver-oriented rather than sender-oriented electoral appeals. As shown by the "All roads of Marxism lead to Moscow" poster, the CDU/CSU did not completely abandon the older style of electioneering, but retained a mix of styles in its campaigning during the 1950s. By the time of the 1957 campaign, however, American-style public relations and advertising that included a more "two-way concept" of communication was coming to the fore.

The serious preparations for the SPD election campaign began in early 1952. The SPD yearbook reported that "the plan for the direct election propaganda was drafted in the summer of 1952, decided in the autumn of 1952, and carried out from the beginning of 1953 on." Compared with the CDU/CSU's efforts to centralize its own campaign, the SPD campaign was even more centralized than its rivals, due in large part to a developed party organization with a clear chain of command under the *Parteivorstand* (executive committee) consisting of *Bezirke* organizations (district), *Unterbezirke* organizations (subdistrict), and *Ortsvereine* (local associations).¹²⁵ In the autumn of 1952, the press and propaganda committee under the leadership of executive committee member Fritz Heine began to put together drafts of posters and leaflets in preparation for the election. During late 1952 and early 1953 the executive committee and the various *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* (working groups) began to review the work of the press and propaganda committee. Also during this time, the 240 party secretaries and local party representatives pored over the propaganda material with the press and propaganda committee, in order to familiarize the party organization with the conceptual plans of the party leadership and to solicit suggestions for further refinement of the material. In preparation for the campaign, Heine visited a number of regional party organizations to instruct them regarding the technical and organizational planning of the campaign. In comparison to the CDU/CSU, the SPD made little use of polling or professional publicists to produce campaign material, and in many cases the party leadership involved itself in some of the most technical campaigning details. As a consequence of the involvement at the various levels of the party's organization, the propaganda was planned well in advance of the election and unmistakably reflected the sentiments of the party's leaders, membership, and core constituents, although not necessarily those of potential voters.¹²⁶

With the death of Kurt Schumacher in August 1952, the SPD entered a period of transition, particularly in terms of its economic policy as it moved away from

its support of a planned economy. At its September 1952 *Parteitag* (party conference) in Dortmund, the SPD issued an *Aktionsprogramm* (action program) that called for socialization of basic industries alone, increased living standards for everyone in society, and a more just distribution of the economic wealth. Most importantly, the program endorsed economic planning of the political economy, but competition within individual industries. Following the announcement of the Dortmund program, Karl Schiller, a leading SPD economics expert, summed up the party's position with the phrase: "Competition as much as possible, planning as much as necessary."¹²⁷ Clearly, the SPD was not yet endorsing the free market, but in 1952 the party had already begun the long and painful road to the 1959 Bad Godesberg Program whereby it gave up its Marxist ideology.

The party's leadership reiterated these positions at the SPD's official opening of the campaign in a May 1953 *Wahlkongreß* (election congress), held in a Frankfurt hall decked out in a sea of red flags and banners. In the culminating speech of the congress, Erich Ollenhauer, the SPD's leading candidate for chancellor and chairman of the executive committee, laid out the major themes of the campaign. As Ollenhauer explained, because the SPD had been in opposition for the last four years, the party could not base its propaganda upon its record in government. Accordingly, Ollenhauer concentrated on pointing out the deficiencies of the government and at the same time highlighting the party's corresponding goals in the next years. Much of Ollenhauer's speech critiqued the government's foreign policy, including its support of the European Defense Community and its inability to achieve unification. In the economic realm, Ollenhauer lashed out at the government as pursuing "the policies of the retention and strengthening of the political and economic position of power for large property [*Großbesitz*]. It is a policy of the restoration."¹²⁸ In many respects the speech set the tone for the SPD campaign by situating the party as negating CDU/CSU policies—a natural position for a party in opposition, but never really fully articulating a constructive and positive platform to be offered as an alternative. This problematic approach surfaced in the SPD's economics propaganda that concentrated on negative developments of the economy, especially the rise in prices.

One of the challenges confronting the SPD was that in contrast to the federal government, and by extension the CDU/CSU, the party in the 1950s did not fully utilize public opinion surveys to conceptualize and formulate its campaign strategies. In June 1948 Karl von Stackelberg of the EMNID Institut in Bielefeld wrote the head of the SPD, Kurt Schumacher, explaining the importance of the growing field of public opinion research. Although not showing exactly how, Von Stackelberg stressed that EMNID could tailor surveys for the SPD's specific use. It does not appear, however, that Schumacher responded to the letter.¹²⁹ According to Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, Carlo Schmid, one of the leading Social Democrats, tried in 1949 to persuade Schumacher to work with the Institut für Demoskopie, but to no avail.¹³⁰

It was not until after its defeat in the 1953 Bundestag election that the SPD began retaining polling institutes to supply polling data used particularly for

preparation of its election campaigns.¹³¹ In October 1955, Fritz Heine, who headed the SPD election campaigns, approached von Stackelberg of EMNID to request a public opinion survey for Baden-Württemberg in preparation for the 1956 state election.¹³² Stackelberg regretted to inform Heine that EMNID was already under contract to conduct two surveys before the election.¹³³ At this point, it appears, the SPD contacted the opinion research group DIVO (Deutsches Institut für Volksumfragen, German Institute for Public Opinion) to conduct its surveys for the 1957 Bundestag election campaign, along with subscribing to the general surveys from EMNID. In any case, in 1953 the SPD subscribed to the EMNID Institut's regularly conducted polls on public opinion trends, but it did not yet receive specialized surveys on specific topics such as those the CDU/CSU contracted from the Institut für Demoskopie. Although leery of the validity of these surveys because they were not sufficiently representative and their questions were rather limited, the SPD's leadership regarded the surveys as somewhat useful for guiding their campaign in the most general way.

In a June 1953 meeting with the party secretaries, the press and propaganda committee was particularly struck by the survey's findings that, as of April, 33 percent of the population was still undecided and therefore represented potential SPD voters. Yet to their chagrin, it also showed that a higher percentage of voters were already committed to the CDU/CSU compared to the party's results in the 1949 election, and that their rival's popularity had been growing since July 1952. Also alarming was the committee's discovery that workers were more likely to be still undecided than were core elements of the CDU/CSU's support, such as the independently employed, farmers, white-collar workers, and bureaucrats. Thus, the committee concluded, the SPD had to redouble its efforts "to lift the haze of government propaganda lies" for all to see the present situation clearly.¹³⁴ Undoubtedly this message had a potential audience, for EMNID surveys did show that West Germans were concerned about such issues as increased prices and a shortage in home construction.¹³⁵ It was the issue of prices that the SPD would use to go on the attack, but as the party secretaries' meeting revealed, the working class was still the party's principal target audience.

Not only did the campaign's target audience reflect traditional SPD concerns, its propaganda material reflected older approaches. Although the SPD expressed a desire "to test and apply new advertising and propaganda methods," the bulk of campaign materials were of the traditional sort. The organization leaned most heavily upon posters, leaflets, and election newspapers, which had a circulation of 6.6, 8.2, and 8.5 million copies respectively. However, the SPD did utilize new audio recordings and films. The recordings included relatively short political talks intermixed with musical cabaret. But the results proved disappointing due to the recordings' poor sound quality and the inadequate sound equipment for projecting the recordings. The films, on the other hand, were regarded as particularly effective. The party distributed three films, one of which was a short cartoon under two minutes long. The 35-minute-long *Jahre der Entscheidung* (Year of Decision) depicted West Germany's post-1945 developments interspersed with Schu-

macher's protests and demands on the particular issues of the day. The twelve-minute *Für Deutschland und Europe* (For Germany and Europe) contained excerpts of Ollenhauer's address at the Frankfurt election congress. An after-report of the campaign concluded that although the films were effective at certain events, their cost might have outweighed their usefulness.¹³⁶ Special election newspapers in four different issues played an especially important role in the election campaign for no other reason than their mass circulation of about 1 million copies each.¹³⁷ One of them, *Das deutsche Wunder* (The German Miracle) dealt particularly with economics.

The newspaper was typical of the SPD's attacks against the CDU/CSU: it depicted the stress caused by the rise in prices, questioned the social security of West Germans, and portrayed Adenauer's leading economics experts, especially Erhard, as merely serving the interests of large industry. *Das deutsche Wunder* supplemented other SPD attacks against the CDU/CSU in regard to industry's contributions to its campaigns. One such example was *Unternehmermillionen kaufen politische Macht* (Industrial Millions Buy Political Power). This rather lengthy pamphlet published for the 1953 campaign supplied documentary evidence, including memos, letters, and meeting notes, of industry's contributions to the bourgeois parties. Other pieces of propaganda made the same point, although in a form more accessible to the public.

A prominent feature of *Das deutsche Wunder* was that it took direct aim at Die Waage's advertisements with a weakly constructed satire of Fritz and Otto. Employing a tone that was decidedly reminiscent of Die Waage's advertisements, a questioning Otto, crafted to represent the average West German who believed Erhard was responsible for the German miracle, asked Fritz what was the source of the production increase in West Germany. Fritz informed Otto that the effort of West Germany's workers, not Erhard's, had brought about this economic reconstruction. The myth of the currency reform was bunk, Fritz claimed, because the subsequent rise in prices had directly hurt consumers. Finally, Fritz asked Otto whether "you think it's right that a small group of Germans live better today compared to before the war, while millions live much worse?" In the end, Otto went away converted, agreeing with Fritz that a new economic policy must be found. This dialogue, like much of the SPD's propaganda as a whole, aimed to show the negative side of the economic miracle, including the government's responsibility for the growth in economic inequality.¹³⁸

If this article demonstrates anything, it is the SPD's acute awareness of Die Waage's effective campaigns and the party's conviction that it had to provide some sort of response. Seizing upon Fritz and Otto from the dialogue advertisements, the party concluded that the characters were so well known that they could use their actual names when satirizing them. With the growth in the economy and the West Germans' perception that their conditions were improving, the SPD was clearly on the defensive in terms of the issue of economics. Although West Germany's ongoing economic reconstruction and expansion could not be denied, the SPD tried to demonstrate in *Das deutsche Wunder* that this process was benefiting

only a few. This special campaign newspaper underscored the fact that the SPD was still attempting to appeal only to the core of its traditional support. The figures depicted throughout *Das deutsche Wunder* tended to be working-class types positioned at the lower end of the economic ladder. Accordingly, the messages in this campaign newspaper were attractive only to this segment of the electorate.

But it was doubtful that this message achieved much resonance among the general West German populace. As one CDU/CSU report commented after the election, with the increased economic growth, ever expanding segments of the population were accepting the government's market policies and becoming increasingly skeptical of the SPD's planned economy slogans.¹³⁹ Evidence of economic improvement abounded. Income increased at an average annual rate of 9.7 percent between 1950 and 1959. Between 1950 and 1954, employees' gross income grew 40 percent. In the 1950s the Federal Statistics Office conducted an ongoing study of an "average consumer group" made up of a sample of 250 families from a middle-level income bracket with two parents and two children. The study found that "fixed expenses," consisting of food, housing, heat, and lighting, continued to decrease through the 1950s from 62.3 percent of expenses in 1950 to 49.8 percent in 1957, thereby allowing these families to spend more on consumer and luxury goods. Critics of these surveys, mostly from research institutes supported by the trade unions, doubted whether these groups were truly representative. Clearly budgets remained tight and luxury spending was limited in the first half of the 1950s, but the trends in the figures did reflect an expanding living standard for a substantial group of West Germans.¹⁴⁰ Although it was true that a few in West Germany were becoming very rich from economic reconstruction, the overall improvement of most people's conditions was hard to deny. Pre-election polling indicated that the vast majority of West German perceived their economic conditions as either improving or remaining the same since the year before.¹⁴¹ Undoubtedly, pensioners and women "standing alone," groups left out of the Federal Statistics Office's study, continued to struggle, but for most the trend was clearly upwards.

The SPD also played into the hands of the CDU/CSU through its focus in the campaign upon personalities. Early on in the campaign Fritz Heine stressed the necessity of highlighting the SPD's leadership with slogans such as "No to Adenauer—Yes to Ollenhauer" and "Out with Adenauer—We vote Ollenhauer."¹⁴² Eventually the slogan "Ollenhauer instead of Adenauer" was featured on one of the SPD's main posters.¹⁴³ Adenauer's popularity, evidenced by public opinion polls, doomed this strategy to failure. A June 1953 Institut für Demoskopie poll indicated that 51 percent of respondents believed Adenauer was the most capable German politician, compared to only 6 percent endorsing Ollenhauer.¹⁴⁴ Ollenhauer could not match Adenauer's charisma on the stump or his forceful personality that projected through the media, not to mention Adenauer's advantage of a huge publicity machine geared to generate his positive image. Even at the time, the SPD's strategy appeared fatally flawed to anyone familiar with the polling results, and the CDU/CSU's success in the election confirmed the folly of placing Ollenhauer as Adenauer's main antagonist.¹⁴⁵

The SPD's share of the vote fell short of expectations, with the party securing 28.8 percent compared to the CDU/CSU's 45.2 percent. At the first postelection executive committee meeting, Ollenhauer expressed disappointment, although he optimistically pointed out that the SPD's votes had increased by 1 million. He indicated a sense of SPD isolation by comparing the current political situation with the threat of the Harzburg Front, the amalgamation of right-wing groups including the Nazis that had formed in 1931 in opposition to a centrist government and contributed to the collapse of the Weimar government. He feared that a "co-ordination process" (*Gleichschaltungprozess*) of the right's control of the radio and press would ensue in West Germany. Perhaps most despairingly, Fritz Heine, the press and propaganda committee chairperson, commented that he did not believe there would be another free election in four years and that this marked the beginning of the end for democracy in West Germany. The SPD had to become more aggressive, he said—in many respects reflecting the old guard's conception of harsh ideological warfare with political opponents that had prevailed in the Weimar era.

However, other voices were raised at the meeting. Fritz Henßler, an executive committee member from North Rhine–Westphalia, sharply attacked Heine by stating that in the future a man under such psychological pressure should not be the party's press chief. Others commented that the party's organization was weak, and it had made mistakes in its propaganda. Ernst Reuter, the reforming mayor of West Berlin, observed that "[t]he people haven't responded to our anti-Erhard propaganda. We must now lead our campaign positively and Hamburg [the site of the next local elections] is the first test. Perhaps the electorate heard too much of our 'no' and not our positive efforts." Waldemar von Knöringen concurred that "during the campaign the SPD was too much on the defensive, its attacks on Erhard economic policy were not convincing, and its policies were too much about negation" (*Nein-Parole*).¹⁴⁶

After the SPD's defeat in the election, this dissatisfaction pervaded not only the executive committee, but the entire party apparatus as well, especially among the party's reformers. A combined session of the executive committee, party committee, control commission, district secretaries, parliamentary fraction, and state ministers on 17 September analyzed the mistakes and lessons of the 1953 campaign. Some of the reformers of the party, such as Willy Brandt, complained that "[o]ur slogans did not always draw any enthusiasm. We must become a catch-all party [*Volkspartei*] without giving up being a workers' party." Other reformers also voiced dissatisfaction with the way the campaign had been run. Karl Schiller, one of the main reformers in the area of economics, commented that "[s]ocialization has been discredited by its misuse in the Eastern Zone. The slogan of social security was a flop with the people. It must be appended with the demand for social improvement."

At the end of the meeting Ollenhauer defended the SPD's propaganda methods. He commented that he was proud that the SPD had conducted a fair election campaign and added that a campaign of the type led by Adenauer was out of

the question.¹⁴⁷ Clearly the party was not ready to revamp its propaganda approach. Nevertheless, in other quarters of the SPD, party members began criticizing the orientation of the party's "vocabulary of agitation." The social minister of Lower Saxony, Heinrich Albertz, commented in the SPD organ *Neue Vorwärts* that the language of the SPD's propaganda was directed entirely toward the proletariat. The party had to develop new methods to attract the broad masses so that it could jump the 30 percent hurdle.¹⁴⁸ The process of reforming the SPD's propaganda was underway, but the effects of this undertaking would not be noticeably apparent in the 1957 election. In many respects, the SPD was operating within a vastly different paradigm from that of the CDU/CSU, which clearly supported Noelle-Neumann's view that public opinion surveys were a form of social control. Instead, the SPD subscribed to a method that sought to rationally engage the electorate in order to convince it of the benefits of the party's political vision. Unfortunately for the SPD this vision spoke only to the working class.

The CDU/CSU tallied huge gains in the Bundestag election on 6 September 1953, snaring 45.2 percent of the vote, up from 31 percent in 1949. International issues such as the reunification of Germany, West Germany's rearmament, and the political fallout from the Soviet suppression of the 17 June uprising played crucial roles in the campaign. Nevertheless, some postelection surveys did suggest the importance of other issues—including economics.¹⁴⁹ One question asked CDU/CSU voters why they had cast their ballot for the CDU/CSU. Their answers were varied. The leading reply, with 30 percent, was Adenauer's personality and his prestige in the world—reflecting to a certain extent the importance of geopolitical issues in the campaign. The second-ranking response was religious reasons, with 21 percent. Economic progress came in third at 19 percent, while satisfaction with the CDU's successes, which could include economic development, ranked fourth with 17 percent. By contrast, when the same question was posed to SPD voters, 69 percent expressed their belief that the SPD represented the interests of the worker.¹⁵⁰ What is striking is the difference in the diversity of responses. While CDU/CSU voters cited a number of reasons for casting their ballot for the CDU/CSU, SPD voters were attracted to the party predominately for one reason: it defended the interests of the worker. This response reflected the fact that the SPD was a party limited to a single issue that could attract voters. In many respects, the SPD propaganda reaffirmed the narrow basis of the party's appeal. It could be seen as inspiring its core constituents to get out and cast their ballots rather than attracting new supporters.

This greater diversity of reasons for voting for the CDU/CSU was also reflected in the party's sociological support. Given the background of the CDU/CSU, Catholics constituted a large part of the party's vote, reflecting a clear continuity in Catholic voting behavior between Weimar elections and the 1953 election. In the 1924 Reichstag election, 55 percent of all Catholic votes were cast for the Center Party, while in 1953 about 52 percent of all Catholics voted for the CDU/CSU. In other words, the CDU/CSU won over the base of the Weimar-era Center Party. But it was significant that the CDU/CSU was able to branch out to new

groups without losing support from its core group of Catholics. In the 1953 election a little over 35 percent of the CDU/CSU's vote came from Protestants, by no means an insignificant figure. The CDU/CSU was still the "Christian party" in the Federal Republic's party system, with 58 percent of its voters regularly attending church.¹⁵¹ However, most of the party's propaganda ignored or played down religious or cultural issues in favor of highlighting international or economic issues so as not to alienate less devout, often times Protestant voters. It was the churches, especially the Catholic Church, that made the preferred party and candidate clear to their congregations.

The CDU/CSU's ability to reach out to groups outside its core also came into play with regard to electoral support and social class. Although the SPD was clearly the workers' party, surveys indicated that the CDU/CSU was able to garner 24 percent of the workers' vote. This still ranked below the 36 percent enjoyed by the SPD, but nevertheless the figure was a significant factor in the CDU/CSU's victory.¹⁵² This translated into 26 percent of the CDU/CSU's ballots coming from the working class, who formed the largest single group supporting the CDU/CSU. The next largest groups were pensioners (19 percent), farmers (17 percent), and civil servants and white collar workers (15 percent).¹⁵³ One interpretation of this voting behavior was that the religious loyalty of the Catholic working class toward the CDU/CSU was greater than class loyalty toward the SPD. Particularly decisive for the CDU/CSU was its advantage in the female vote—a clear target of much of its propaganda. In the election, 47.2 percent of women voted for the CDU/CSU compared to 38.9 percent of men. Considering that women cast 53.7 percent of the valid second ballots, this difference was significant.¹⁵⁴ With its relative diversity of support, by 1953 the CDU/CSU was becoming a *Volks-partei* in a way that the SPD could not.

Although economics does not appear to be as crucial a factor as Adenauer's personality in gaining votes for CDU/CSU, it was nevertheless an important element in many voters' minds. For example, 46 of 100 CDU/CSU voters cited economic prosperity as either the first, second, or third most important reason for voting for the party. In comparison, 59 percent listed Adenauer's improvement of West Germany's standing in the world and 47 percent cited Adenauer's leadership qualities as within the top three reasons for supporting the CDU/CSU.¹⁵⁵ In light of these figures, the strategy of mixing the issue of economic success with geopolitical issues was an effective means of selling the party. The CDU/CSU molded economics to accentuate both the threat of communism and the idea that Adenauer and the CDU/CSU represented the legitimacy of the West German state itself. Planned and controlled economics, whose distinctions were regularly blurred by the CDU/CSU, offered an example of what a socialist alternative would mean. West Germany's economic success proved that it constituted the "real" Germany. Therefore, economic reconstruction not only directly lent support to the CDU/CSU, but also could be blended with other issues that were important in voters' support of the party. As seen from the variety of its economic propaganda, the CDU/CSU successfully employed economics as a multidimensional issue that possessed

the potential to attract voters from across religious, class, and gender divisions. In this important regard, the CDU/CSU enjoyed a significant advantage over the SPD. As a party created in the rubble of Germany's defeat, the CDU/CSU was not beholden to a particular class or group of core supporters, as was the SPD to a large extent, and as a consequence it had the flexibility to position itself in a number of different ways.

Although the CDU/CSU targeted the SPD in most of its attacks, most of the CDU/CSU gains did not stem from losses in SPD votes. In fact, although the SPD's share of the vote dropped from 29.2 percent in 1949 to 28.8 percent in 1953, the party collected a greater total number of votes (6.9 million versus 7.9 million).¹⁵⁶ The West German electorate was growing, from 24.5 million in 1949 to 28.5 million in 1953, through young voters coming of age and the flow of refugees from the East. The CDU/CSU was outdistancing the SPD in capturing these new voters. A study of the 1953 election revealed that voters might drift within the Marxist or bourgeois camps, but not between them. In other words, the CDU/CSU's increase in votes was not necessarily due to former SPD voters, but instead to voters who had previously voted for bourgeois splinter parties. The FDP, DP, and Center parties all declined in 1953, along with several splinter bourgeois/conservative parties that had met the 5 percent threshold for entering into Bundestag.¹⁵⁷ In this perspective, the CDU/CSU's propaganda against the SPD did not win over former SPD voters. Instead, the propaganda won over the splinter-party vote by portraying the CDU/CSU as a party strong enough to protect West Germany against a Marxist threat at home and abroad. Therefore, Die Waage's ads, which were often criticized by the organization's contributors because they appeared in the bourgeois press and would not reach the working class, might have had a stronger impact on potential CDU/CSU voters than if they had been placed in more working-class oriented media.

Finally, the 1953 election campaign also demonstrated that the CDU/CSU's electoral techniques were in transition. Faced with the imminent threat of a socialist victory in the 1953 election, the CDU/CSU built up not only a network of propaganda organizations that allowed the party to promote itself more effectively, but it also consciously made the decision to increasingly center the campaign upon the party's self-image as reflected by its leadership and their achievements. In conjunction with this development, the 1953 election saw the first widespread use of public opinion polling in election campaigns, thereby allowing the construction of a party image that was pitched more carefully at the West German population. This desire for a broad-based constituency also was reflected in the decreased emphasis upon the antimaterialist conceptions of the party's economic policy that had figured so prominently in the 1949 election. Instead, the party adapted to larger socioeconomic trends and began to trumpet the more individualist pleasures of consumerism. Clearly, the 1953 election was a transitional step both in the transformation of the West German political culture and in how the economic miracle was sold. This transformation emerged fully in what would be the greatest triumph of Adenauer and CDU/CSU: the 1957 Bundestag election.

Notes

1. Rohe, *Wahlen und Wählertradition in Deutschland: Kulturelle Grundlagen deutscher Parteien und Parteiensysteme im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, 164; and Falter, "Kontinuität und Neubeginn: Die Bundestagswahl 1949 zwischen Weimar und Bonn," 236–263.
2. Werner Kaltefleiter, "Die Entwicklung des deutschen Parteiensystems in der Ära Adenauer," in *Konrad Adenauer und seine Zeit: Politik und Persönlichkeit des ersten Bundeskanzlers, Band II: Beiträge der Wissenschaft*, ed. Dieter Blumenwitz, Klaus Gotto, Hans Maier, Konrad Repgen, Hans-Peter Schwarz (Stuttgart, 1976), 285–287.
3. Die Bundestagswahlen vom 6 September 1953, December 1953, VII-003-002/1, ACDP.
4. Schmidtchen, *Die befragte Nation*, 160. These figures represent the percentage of respondents who named a party preference, which was on average about 65 percent of all questioned.
5. See the polling figures in Schmidtchen, *Die befragte Nation*, 163.
6. See election results in Ritter, ed., *Wahlen und Wahlkämpfe in Deutschland*, 266; and Gerhard A. Ritter and Merith Niehuss, *Wahlen in Deutschland, 1946–1991* (Munich, 1991), 158–181.
7. Horst O. Walker, *Das Presse und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung: Eine Untersuchung zu Fragen der Organisation, Koordination, und Kontrolle der Presse und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit der Bundesregierung* (Frankfurt am Main, 1982), 80.
8. Werner G. Krueger, "Das Bundespresseamt: Es begann in der Jugendstilvilla Drachenfelsstraße 8," in *Kinderjahre der Bundesrepublik: Von der Trümmerzeit zum Wirtschaftswunder*, ed. Rudolf Pörtner (Düsseldorf, 1989), 167.
9. Frank Andreas Buchwald, "Adenauers Informationspolitik und das Bundespresseamt" (Ph.D. diss., University of Mainz, 1991), 47–48.
10. *Ibid.*, 49–51.
11. *Ibid.*, 30.
12. Walker, *Presse und Informationsamt*, 107–109.
13. *Ibid.*, 48.
14. Buchwald, "Adenauers Informationspolitik," 58.
15. Klaus Gotto, Hans-Otto Kleinmann, Reinhard Schreiner, eds, *Im Zentrum der Macht: Das Tagebuch von Staatssekretär Lenz, 1951–1953* (Düsseldorf, 1989), vii–xxviii and 2.
16. Letter from Lenz to Adenauer, 4 August 1952, I-172-58/2 (NL Lenz), ACDP.
17. Gotto, *Im Zentrum der Macht*, 84 and 154.
18. Letter from Lenz to Heilmann, 6 November 1951, I-172-59 (NL Lenz), ACDP. See also Han Edgar Jahn, *An Adenauers Seite: Sein Berater erinnert sich* (Munich, 1987), 93.
19. Gerhard Schmidtchen and Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, "Die Bedeutung Repräsentativer Bevölkerungsumfragen für die Offene Gesellschaft," 168–169.
20. Schmidtchen, *Die befragte Nation*, 108–109.
21. Mervin D. Field, "Political Opinion Polling in the United States of America," in *Political Opinion Polling: An International Review*, ed. Robert M. Worcester (London, 1983), 198–206; and Herbert F. Weisberg et al., *An Introduction to Survey Research and Data Analysis* (Glenview, IL, 1989), 34–35.
22. Simpson, "Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's 'Spiral of Silence' and the Historical Context of Communication Theory," 148–171. Although he possesses no concrete evidence, Simpson suggests that Noelle-Neumann might have participated in the secret polling as a number of internal SD reports and Noelle-Neumann's *Das Reich* articles closely paralleled one other in both timing and subject matter.
23. Richard L. Merritt, *Democracy Imposed: U.S. Occupation Policy and the German Public, 1945–1949* (New Haven, 1995), 74–83; and Noelle-Neumann, "Political Opinion Polling in Germany," 44.
24. Schindelbeck and Ilgen, "Haste Was, Biste Was!" *Werbung für die Soziale Marktwirtschaft*, 231.
25. Letter from E. P. Neumann to Chancellor Adenauer, 26 September 1949, B145/1566, BA Koblenz.

26. Letter to from Chancellery to E. P. Neumann, 20 October 1949, B145/1566, BA Koblenz.
27. Erich Peter Neumann, "Politische und soziale Meinungsforschung in Deutschland," in *Empirische Sozialforschung: Meinungs- und Marktforschung Methode und Probleme*, ed. Institut zur Förderung öffentlicher Angelegenheiten e.V. (Frankfurt am Main, 1952), 44.
28. Schmidtchen and Noelle-Neumann, "Die Bedeutung Repräsentativer Bevölkerungsumfragen für die Offene Gesellschaft," 170 and 186–195. See also Simpson's "Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's 'Spiral of Silence' and the Historical Context of Communication Theory," which traces Noelle-Neumann's thoughts on democracy and society from her 1940 dissertation to her important work on public opinion, *The Spiral of Silence: Public Opinion—Our Social Skin*, (Chicago, 1984).
29. Quoted from Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Konrad Adenauer: A German Politician and Statesman in a Period of War, Revolution, and Reconstruction*, vol. 2 (Providence, 1997), 71.
30. Letter from E. P. Neumann to Chancellor Adenauer, 8 May 1950, BA Koblenz, B 145/1566.
31. For results of polling on rearmament, see Michael Geyer, "Cold War Angst: The Case of West-German Opposition to Rearmament and Nuclear Weapons," in Schissler, *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949–1968*, 376–408.
32. Aktennotiz für Herrn Min. Dir. Dr. Brand, 6 November 1950, B145/1566, BA Koblenz; and Johannes J. Hoffmann, *Adenauer: "Vorsicht und keine Indiskretion!" Zur Informationspolitik und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit der Bundesregierung, 1949–1955* (Aachen, 1995), 141.
33. Aufzeichnung, 6 March 1957, BA 145/1566, BA Koblenz.
34. Jahn, *An Adenauers Seite*, 70.
35. Noelle and Neumann, *The Germans: Public Opinion Polls, 1947–1966*, 209.
36. Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, 312–313.
37. Jahn, *An Adenauers Seite*, 72–73, 100–102.
38. Scott M. Cutlip *The Unseen Power: Public Relations. A History* (Hillsdale, NJ, 1994), 1–72; and Richard S. Tedlow, *Keeping the Corporate Image: Public Relations and Business, 1900–1950* (Greenwich, CT, 1979), 36–37.
39. Cutlip, *The Unseen Power*, 143–154.
40. Stuart Ewen, *PR! A Social History of Spin* (New York, 1996), 102–127.
41. Tedlow, *Keeping the Corporate Image*, 39–45; and Cutlip, *The Unseen Power*, 159–212.
42. S. Jonathan Wiesen, *West German Industry and the Challenge of the Nazi Past, 1945–1955*, 107–108; and Schindelbeck and Ilgen, "Haste Was, Biste Was!" *Werbung für die Soziale Marktwirtschaft*, 18–25.
43. Jahn, *An Adenauers Seite*, 72–77. For Jahn's view on American public relations, see Jahn, *Lebendige Demokratie: Die Praxis der politischen Meinungspflege in Deutschland*.
44. Jahn, *An Adenauers Seite*, 93–95.
45. Jahn, *Lebendige Demokratie: Die Praxis der politischen Meinungspflege in Deutschland*, 11–70.
46. Bericht über die ADK für die Zeit von der Gründung bis 31.8.1956, I-172-51 (NL Lenz), ACDP.
47. Hoffmann, *Adenauer: "Vorsicht und keine Indiskretion!" Zur Informationspolitik und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit der Bundesregierung, 1949–1955*, 270–272.
48. Eventually the Deutsches Industrieinstitut, the public relations arm of the BDI, provided the ADK with literature to be distributed at meetings. Letter from Jahn to Lenz, 17 February 1954, I-172-051 (NL Lenz), ACDP.
49. Letter from von Eckardt to Adenauer, 27 August 1952, I-010-019/4 (NL von Eckardt), ACDP.
50. Letter from von Eckardt to Adenauer, 3 July 1953, and the included report Aktionen des Bundespresseamtes zur Vorbereitung der Bundestagswahlen 1953, BA Koblenz 145/0853.
51. Vor dem Wahlen: Ein Querschnitt durch die öffentliche Meinung, Institut für Demoskopie, ZSg 132/594, BA Koblenz.
52. Schmidtchen, *Die befragte Nation*, 197.
53. Die Bundestagswahlen vom 6 September 1953, December 1953, VII-003-002/1, ACDP.

54. Schmidtchen, *Die befragte Nation*, 160.
55. Noelle and Neumann, *The Germans: Public Opinion Polls, 1947–1966*, 256–257.
56. For a discussion of the Federal Press Agency's film documenting Adenauer's trip, see Buchwald, "Adenauer's Informationspolitik," 144–148.
57. Schwarz, *Adenauer*, vol. 2, 71–78.
58. Günter Buchstab, ed., *Adenauer: "Es mußte alles neu gemacht werden": Die Protokolle des CDU-Bundesvorstandes, 1950–1953* (Stuttgart, 1986), 97.
59. Ibid., 117; and Schwarz, *Adenauer*, vol. 2, 61.
60. Schwarz, *Adenauer*, vol. 2, 58–60 and 74–75.
61. Wünsche, *Die Korea-Krise als ordnungspolitische Herausforderung der deutschen Wirtschaftspolitik: Texte und Dokumente*, 77.
62. Noelle and Neumann, *The Germans: Public Opinion Polls, 1947–1966*, 214.
63. Die Stimmung im Bundesgebiet, Was an Adenauer kritisiert wird, Institut für Demoskopie, September 1953, I-172-35/2, ACDP.
64. Vermerk für Staatssekretär Lenz, 1 December, 1951, B 145/878 BA Koblenz. Pamphlets found in the library of the Bundespresse- und Informationsamt, Bonn.
65. Die Bundestagwahlen vom 6 September 1953, December 1953, VII-003-002/1, ACDP.
66. Noelle and Neuman, *Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung, 1947–1955*, 233.
67. Schmidtchen, *Die befragte Nation*, 163.
68. Kramer, *The West German Economy, 1945–1955*, 164–165.
69. Die Bundestagwahlen vom 6 September 1953, December 1953, VII-003-002/1, ACDP; and Schmidtchen, *Die befragte Nation*, 160.
70. Wähler und Parteien: Die Wirksamkeit von Flugblättern, 1952, Institut für Demoskopie, ZSg 132/181, BA Koblenz.
71. Volker Hetterich, *Von Adenauer zu Schröder: Der Kampf um Stimmen. Eine Längsschnittanalyse der Wahlkampagnen von CDU und SPD bei den Bundestagwahlen 1949 bis 1998* (Opladen, 2000), 139–140.
72. Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany: The CDU/CSU in Government and Opposition, 1945–1976*, 59–69 and 241–267.
73. Wahlhelfer für die Bundestagwahl 1953, 3 August 1953, III-002-256/2 (LV Westfalen Lippe), ACDP.
74. Wulf Schönbohm, *Die CDU wird moderne Volkspartei: Selbstverständnis, Mitglieder, Organisation und Apparat, 1950–1980*, 45–46.
75. Buchstab, *Adenauer: "Es mußte alles neu gemacht werden,"* 401–404.
76. Schönbohm, *Die CDU wird moderne Volkspartei*, 51–53.
77. Buchstab, *Adenauer: "Es mußte alles neu gemacht werden,"* 433.
78. Ibid., 642–643.
79. Günter Buchstab, ed. *Adenauer: "Wir haben wirklich etwas geschaffen": Die Protokolle des CDU-Bundesvorstandes, 1953–1957* (Düsseldorf, 1990), 86–87.
80. Hetterich, *Von Adenauer zu Schröder*, 138–139.
81. Die Bundestagwahlen vom 6 September 1953, December 1953, VII-003-002/1, ACDP.
82. Heck an die Mitglieder des Bundesparteivorstandes, an die Herren Votsitzenden und Landesgeschäftsführer, 1 April 1953, III-002-256/2 (LV Westfalen-Lippe), ACDP.
83. See for example the ongoing report from the Institut für Demoskopie, Die Meinung über Bonn, 1951–1954 in I-172-35/1 (NL Lenz), ACDP.
84. Die Bundestagwahlen vom 6 September 1953, December 1953, VII-003-002/1, ACDP.
85. An exception to this was the poster "Our daily bread in peace," which clearly utilized Biblical connotations. However, the bulk of CDU/CSU propaganda did not deal with such matters. See the list of propaganda materials in Die Bundestagwahlen vom 6 September 1953, December 1953, VII-003-002/1, ACDP.
86. Wolfgang Hirsch-Weber and Klaus Schütz, *Wähler und Gewählte: Eine Untersuchung der Bundestagwahl 1953* (Frankfurt am Main, 1957), 68–73.

87. Buchstab, *Adenauer*: "Es mußte alles neu gemacht werden," 225.
88. Heck an allen Landesverbände, 29 July 1953, III-002-259/2 (IV Westfalen-Lippe), ACDP. Figures on campaign spending are from estimates made in March 1953. See Buchstab, *Adenauer*: "Es mußte alles neu gemacht werden," 436. Copy of *Die Entscheidung* found in III-009-030/2 (IV Württemberg-Hollernzollern), ACDP.
89. The Nazi Party newspaper, the *Völkischer Beobachter*, also ran advertisements during the party's rise to power. See De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 270.
90. Wachler und Parteigenossen: Bericht über die politischen Lage, Spring 1952, Institut für Demoskopie, ZSg 132/187, BA Koblenz.
91. Noelle and Neumann, *The Germans: Public Opinion Polls, 1947–1966*, 214.
92. Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands, *Protokoll vom Sozialdemokratischen Wahlkongreß 1953* (Bonn, 1953).
93. "Sie bleiben Marxists, *Union in Deutschland* 27 (10 April 1953): 5.
94. "Sozialismus führt zum Kommunismus," *Union in Deutschland* 68 (2 September 1953): 3.
95. See Schwarz, *Adenauer*, vol. 2, 64–69.
96. Hirsch-Weber and Schütz, *Wähler und Gewählte*, 114–145.
97. For more on communism as the "other" defining West Germany, see Eric D. Weitz, "The Ever-Present Other: Communism in the Making of West Germany," in Schissler, *The Miracle Years*, 219–232.
98. Hirsch-Weber and Schütz, *Wähler und Gewählte*, 95–96 and 107–112.
99. See Fragebogen zum Bundestag-Wahlkampf RWV 48/261, NWHStA. The Kreisverband Aachen reported that the combination of "factual text, caricatures, and satirical verse as effective." Fragebogen zum Bundestagwahlkampf. Bericht der Kreispartei Aachen-Stadt, 20 October 1953, RWV 48/194, NWHStA.
100. Noelle and Neumann, *The Germans: Public Opinion Polls, 1947–1966*, 553.
101. "Die Wirtschaft im Dienst der Hausfrau," 28 June 1952, B 102/9086, BA Koblenz.
102. This echoes Erica Carter's discussion of women as "consumer citizens" within the social market economy. See Carter, *How German Is She?* 19–75.
103. Abrechnung über Erhard-Briefe, I-083-213/2 (NL Fritz Hellwig), ACDP.
104. "Liebe Hausfrau!" Professor Dr. Ludwig Erhard, 1 September 1953, RWV 48 (CDU Kreisverband Dinslaken), NWHStA.
105. For a discussion of Die Waage's advertisements in the 1953 election campaign, see Schindelbeck and Ilgen, "Haste Was, Biste Was!" *Werbung für die Soziale Marktwirtschaft*, 109–129.
106. Protokoll von Vorstand und Beirat, 19 January 1953, Die Waage, Zugang 127, LES.
107. Sitzung des Vorstands, 19 June 1953, Die Waage, Zugang 127, LES.
108. Vorstand Protokolle, 9 March 1953, Die Waage, Zugang 127, LES.
109. Letter from Erhard to Dr. Ulrich Haberland, 16 June 1953, Die Waage, Zugang 124, LES.
110. Letter to Dr. Haberland, 18 February 1954, Die Waage, Zugang 124, LES; and Hirsch-Weber and Schütz, *Wähler und Gewählte*, 16.
111. Schindelbeck and Ilgen, "Haste Was, Biste Was!" *Werbung für die Soziale Marktwirtschaft*, 270–271.
112. "Die Flucht nach vorn," *Der Spiegel* 37 (9 September 1953): 11–17.
113. Elisabeth Noelle and Erich Peter Neumann, *Jahrbuch der Öffentlichen Meinung, 1957* (Allensbach am Bodensee, 1957), 193.
114. See the discussion of the advertisement in Schindelbeck and Ilgen, "Haste Was, Biste Was!" *Werbung für die Soziale Marktwirtschaft*, 126–128.
115. Eine Untersuchung über die voraussichtlich Werbung eines Aufklärungs-Feldzuges, March 1953, Institut für Demoskopie, Abt. 16, Nr. 4, Fasz. 11, RWVA.
116. For a good analysis of the Nazis' campaign techniques and sociological support on a national scale, see Childers, *The Nazi Voter*. For a view of the Nazi rise to power on the local level, see the outstanding book by William Sheridan Allen, *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single Town, 1922–1945*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1984).

117. In addition to Allen's *The Nazi Seizure of Power*, among the many works examining the propaganda techniques of the Nazi Party at the local level see Jeremy Noakes, *The Nazi Party in Lower Saxony, 1921–1933* (Oxford, 1971) and Detlef Mühlberger, "Central Control versus Regional Authority: A Case Study of Nazi Propaganda in Westphalia, 1925–1932" in *The Formation of the Nazi Constituency, 1919–1933*, ed. Thomas Childers (Totowa, 1986), 64–103.
118. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim, (Boston, 1971), 180–181. See also David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda* (New York, 1993), 22–27.
119. Kaff, *Die Unionsparteien, 1946–1950*, 456–457.
120. Josef Goebbels, ed., *Moderne politische Propaganda* (Berlin, 1930), 4 and 17.
121. Behrenbeck, " 'Der Führer' Die Einführung eines politischen Markenartikels," 51–78; and Westphal, *Werbung im Dritten Reich*, 21–22 and 78–90.
122. See De Grazia's discussion of the transformation of European poster making techniques in *Irresistible Empire*, 250–262.
123. See Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda*, 25–26 and Gries, Ilgen, and Schindelbeck, *Ins Gehirn der Masse kriechen!: Werbung und Mentalitätsgeichte*, 45–74.
124. Die Bundestagwahlen vom 6 September 1953, December 1953, VII-003-002/1, ACDP.
125. Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD), *Jahrbuch der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands 1952/53* (Bielefeld, 1954), 233.
126. Hirsch-Weber and Schütz, *Wähler und Gewählte*, 15–18; Hetterich, *Von Adenauer zu Schröder*, 122–123 and 167–168; and *Werbung und Propaganda der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands in Bundestagswahl 1953*, SPD Parteivorstand-03011, AdsD.
127. Klotzbach, *Der Weg zur Staatspartei*, 243–264.
128. See Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD), *1953: Das Jahr der Entscheidung* (Bonn, 1953) and *Das Wahlprogramm der SPD* (Bonn, 1953), two pamphlets published by the executive committee of the SPD and held in the library of the AdsD.
129. Letter from von Stackelberg to Kurt Schumacher, 30 June 1948, SPD Parteivorstand-2AJ0000024, AdsD.
130. Noelle-Neumann, "Political Polling in Germany," 47–48.
131. Schmidtchen, *Die befragte Nation*, 108–109.
132. Letter from Fritz Heine to Stackelberg, 5 November 1955, SPD Parteivorstand-2AJ0000024, AdsD.
133. Letter from Stackelberg to Fritz Heine, 18 November 1955, SPD Parteivorstand-2AJ0000024, AdsD.
134. Sekretärkonferenz, June 1953, SPD Parteivorstand-02559, AdsD.
135. Die Wünsche der Öffentlichkeit an die Bundesregierung in Wirtschafts und Sozialpolitischer Beziehung, EMNID, B 145/4261, BA Koblenz.
136. SPD, *Jahrbuch der Sozialdemokraten, 1952/1953*, 244–245; Hirsch-Weber and Schütz, *Wähler und Gewählte*, 77–82; and *Werbung und Propaganda der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands in Bundestagswahl 1953*, SPD Parteivorstand-03011, AdsD.
137. *Werbung und Propaganda der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands im Bundestagswahlkampf 1953*, SPD Parteivorstand-03011, AdsD.
138. *Das deutsche Wunder*, ZSg 1/90/63, BA Koblenz. "Unternehmermillionen kaufen politische Macht" is held in the library of the AdsD.
139. Die Bundestagwahlen vom 6 September 1953, December 1953, VII-003-002/1, ACDP.
140. Wildt, *Am Beginn der "Konsumgesellschaft": Mangelerfahrung, Lebenshaltung, Wohlstandshoffnung in Westdeutschland in den fünfziger Jahren*, 60, 378.
141. Schmidtchen, *Die befragte Nation*, 163.
142. Protokoll der PV-Sitzung, 6 January 1953, SPD Parteivorstand Protokolle 1953, AdsD.
143. The SPD's three main posters were "Das wollen wir Sozialdemokraten" (1.8 million distributed), "Deutschland Zukunft SPD" (1.2 million distributed), and "Glenhauer statt Adenauer" (1 million distributed). *Werbung und Propaganda der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands im Bundestagswahlkampf 1953*, SPD Parteivorstand-03011, AdsD.

144. Noelle and Neuman, *Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung, 1947–1955*, 192.
145. Die Bundestagwahlen vom 6 September 1953, December 1953, VII-003-002/1, ACDP.
146. Protokoll der PV-Sitzung, 9 September 1953, SPD Parteivorstand Protokolle 1953, AdsD.
147. Petra Weber, ed., *Die SPD-Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag: Sitzungsprotokolle, 1949–1957* (Düsseldorf, 1993), 3–12.
148. Klotzbach, *Der Weg zur Staatspartei*, 292–294.
149. For a study of the public opinion polls dealing with the 1953 election, see Richard L. Merritt, “The 1953 Bundestag Election: Evidence from West German Public Opinion,” *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung* 16 (October 1980): 3–38.
150. Hirsch-Weber and Schütz, *Wähler und Gewählte*, 340–343.
151. Karl Schmitt, “Religious Cleavages in the West German Party System: Persistence and Change, 1949–1987,” in Rohe, *Elections, Parties and Political Traditions*, 179–201.
152. This is drawn from an EMNID survey from late August 1953. The survey also indicated that 19 percent of workers were undecided or would not provide information on their vote. In addition, 21 per cent of workers had decided to vote for the FDP, GB/BHE, or other parties. Hirsch-Weber and Schütz, *Wähler und Gewählte*, 247.
153. Ibid., 249.
154. Ibid., 205 and 216–217. The figures for male/female voting do not include data from Bavaria and the Rhineland-Palatinate.
155. Ibid., 341.
156. Ritter and Niehuss, *Wahlen in Deutschland: Ein Handbuch*, 100.
157. Hirsch-Weber and Schütz, *Wähler und Gewählte*, 163–182. See results in Ritter and Niehuss, *Wahlen in Deutschland*, 100.