1 From the NVA to the Bundeswehr

BRINGING THE EAST GERMANS INTO NATO

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The case of the East German military is different from those of all other members of the former Warsaw Pact.[1] The NVA (Nationale Volksarmee, or National People's Army) was the only armed force disbanded in the aftermath of the collapse of communism. In every other instance, the old army remained in place and underwent a process of democratization and reform. In East Germany, however, several thousand former NVA officers and enlisted personnel were offered the option of joining the Bundeswehr, the West German military, while the vast majority were given their walking papers.

Because the East German experience was so different from the experiences of the other eastern European militaries, it is both important and instructive. It is important because it provides a unique opportunity to look at the process of integrating former NVA officers into the Bundeswehr and at the kind of individual produced by one of the most rigidly controlled and ideologically committed of all of the Warsaw Pact militaries. It is instructive because in the process of integrating these former members of the NVA into the Bundeswehr, the Germans have had an unparalleled opportunity to deal with the kind of professional produced by a communist political system. Some adjusted to the new democratic environment and some did not, but all came to the Bundeswehr heavily influenced by their past in the East German army. A close look at the NVA professionals and the many problems they encountered while being integrated into the Bundeswehr speaks volumes about the difficulties all of the

former communist polities have encountered in attempting to resocialize members of their armed forces. I doubt that any former communist military has not encountered similar problems to varying degrees.

The Problem

On October 3, 1990, the Bundeswehr faced a task unprecedented in recent European military history: dealing with members of a formerly hostile army that neither had been defeated on the battlefield (as had been the case with the Wehrmacht) nor had collapsed as a result of internal strife (as occurred in a number of other countries during the twentieth century). Not only did the Bundeswehr have to figure out what to do with some sixty thousand former members of the NVA, along with their formidable stocks of equipment and munitions, but Bonn was also forced to find a way to integrate many of its former opponents into its own armed forces at a time when Germany was reducing its military—a result of an agreement reached by Helmut Kohl and Mikhail Gorbachev in July 1990 on Russian preconditions for the unification of Germany.

When it came to the NVA, West German Defense Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg wanted as little as possible to do with those who had served the East German communist party (the SED). How could they be expected to be loyal now to a democratic polity? In time, however, it became clear to the military leadership that at least some former members of the NVA would be taken into the Bundeswehr as part of Kohl's overall attempt to show East Germans that they were welcome in this new, united Germany. The task then became one of organizing the practical details of the transition. Although it was clear that political officers, officers over fifty-five, and those who had worked with the Stasi would be excluded, a large pool of potential candidates remained.

Kommando-Ost Is Created

On August 14, 1990, Stoltenberg informed Lieutenant General Jörg Schönbohm that he, Schönbohm, would be taking over as commander of Kommando-Ost, as the new East German structure was to be called. From Stoltenberg's standpoint, assigning the highly capable and politically sensitive Schönbohm to the former German Democratic Republic

(GDR), where there was a serious danger that the NVA could completely disintegrate, took precedence over the command he had been scheduled for.[2]

It was at this point, after considerable discussion, that Stoltenberg laid out the basic rules that were to guide the transition process. On October 3, former NVA members would become part of the Bundeswehr, subject to the Federal Republic of Germany's constitution and expected to follow the provisions of the Bundeswehr's policy of "innere Führung." On that date the Bundeswehr would take over command responsibility for all personnel and equipment that formerly belonged to the NVA.[3] Each unit would be reconstituted with both Bundeswehr and NVA personnel. Furthermore, beginning on September 1, all NVA conscripts undergoing basic training would be trained by Bundeswehr personnel in accordance with its precepts. Finally, starting on October 15, all forces in the former GDR would come under Kommando-Ost, which would administer two military district commands (Leipzig and Neubrandenburg). Kommando-Ost was placed directly under the command of the Ministry of Defense in the person of the general inspector of the Bundeswehr.[4] Kommando-Ost would exist for a six-month transition period—from October to April, 1991, though in fact it lasted until June 31, 1991, when it was succeeded by the Korps and Territorial Kommando-Ost.

To implement this plan, the military decided that all key positions in the former GDR would be taken over by Bundeswehr officers.[5] There would be no doubt about who was in charge. To quote one senior West German officer who was directly involved in the transition process: "We want complete responsibility; we are not here as advisors but as leaders. That goes not only for commanders but for staff officers as well."[6]

Bundeswehr personnel arrived in the GDR on September 17 to begin their work. The task was urgent. With the end of the GDR on October 3, the size of the Bundeswehr rose to about 590,000 soldiers. In order for the West Germans to meet the criteria outlined in the agreement Kohl had concluded with Gorbachev, the Bundeswehr had to be reduced to 370,000 soldiers by December 31, 1994.[7]

Schönbohm laid out in his memoirs what he saw as his major tasks at that time:

> In short, [they] consisted of taking over the NVA, guaranteeing its security and control, dissolving troop units platoon by platoon, releasing the overwhelming majority of soldiers, concentrating the mass of material, weapons, and munitions, building new units of the Bundeswehr, and working together with Soviet troops in order to facilitate their withdrawal.

In the meantime, Schönbohm's greatest problem was to prevent chaos—the NVA had almost collapsed, and the West Germans were worried that unless the East German military had a better "sense of clarity for its future, . . . Kommando-Ost would face very serious problems."[8] In addition, the Bundeswehr was concerned not only that some of the soldiers themselves might do something stupid but also that some of the radical left-wing groups in the former GDR might move to seize NVA weapons.

Kommando-Ost would have a combined staff of 240 commissioned and noncommissioned officers from the west and 360 officers and NCOs from the former NVA. By the time he reported at Strausberg in October, Schönbohm was overseeing some 93,000 former members of the NVA as well as 1,300 Bundeswehr soldiers who were involved in the transition process,[9] including training the 15,000 conscripts who had been called to the colors on September 1 and retraining NCOs and company or platoon commanders (estimated at between 15,000 and 17,000 for the following year). It is hard to overstate just how difficult the task facing Kommando-Ost was. Not only did it have to come up with a new infrastructure to replace the NVA's, but also painful personnel reductions had to be carried out, facilities had to be rebuilt according to much higher West German standards, environmental damage at many NVA facilities (not to mention former Soviet bases) had to be overcome, and a massive amount of equipment and munitions had to be guarded as well as disposed of. At the same time, Schönbohm and his colleagues had to find a way to reach out to the former NVA professionals—the vast majority of whom felt they had been betrayed and were initially very suspicious of the "Wessis."[10]

Another problem was uniforms. What kind of uniforms should the former NVA soldiers wear? Obviously, they could not expect to become part of the Bundeswehr while still wearing their old NVA uniforms.

Acutely sensitive to the psychological aspects of the unification process, Schönbohm persuaded Stoltenberg to use the NATO olive-green uniform. These uniforms were available in the necessary numbers and sizes and would be sufficient to outfit both officers from the west and former members of the NVA. Indeed, Schönbohm underlined the importance of this decision when he noted, "It was of decisive psychological importance that soldiers in a *single* German army should wear the same uniform."[11]

How to Handle Former NVA Personnel?

Militaries the world over have certain characteristics in common. One of the most important is a willingness to carry out orders—once a political decision has been made. And make no mistake, the decision to incorporate former members of the NVA into the Bundeswehr was not a military decision. From a military standpoint it made no sense—the Bundeswehr was being reduced, and many career officers and NCOs were being forced to leave. If anything, taking former NVA personnel into the Bundeswehr would hurt morale.

In spite of their personal feelings, however, once the federal government made a decision to include former NVA personnel in the Bundeswehr, the country's military leaders quickly fell into line. For example, despite his earlier opposition, Stoltenberg worked to facilitate the process. On October 3 he issued an order to Bundeswehr personnel that stated, "We want to give as many of them [NVA soldiers] as fair a chance as possible, to test their suitability for the soldierly profession or as a civilian employee".[12] All together, approximately fifty thousand members of the NVA would join the Bundeswehr, including twenty-five thousand short-term regular and professional soldiers. All former NVA soldiers over fifty would leave the armed forces by December 31.

To bring some order into the process of incorporating former NVA professionals into the Bundeswehr, Bonn divided them into two main categories. The first was the conscripts. They immediately became full-fledged members of the Bundeswehr and received the same pay as their western counterparts. The second category was the short-term regular and professional soldiers, who were further divided into four subcategories. The first included those who would serve for an additional period

(the *Weiterverwender*). They would remain in their current positions, receive a temporary rank, and be paid at a rate to be decided by the Bundeswehr. The second subcategory consisted of those who were in "reserve" (*Wartestand*)—individuals for whom no position was currently available. They would receive 70 percent of their former pay on a temporary basis and would be released at the end of six months, if not before. The third subgroup consisted of short-term regular soldiers (*Soldaten auf Zeit*) who would serve on contract for two years, with a rank in accordance with Bundeswehr regulations. The fourth subgroup consisted of short-term regular soldiers and professional soldiers who would serve for more than two years. Such assignments would be made on the basis of the needs of the service as well as the capabilities of the individuals concerned. When it came to officers, decisions would be made only after they had passed an examination by an independent committee concerning their suitability (a process very much like that used to determine the suitability of former Wehrmacht officers for service in the West German military when the Bundeswehr was first set up).[13]

According to a Bundeswehr officer who was directly involved in the absorption process, for practical purposes Bonn divided former NVA personnel into three additional categories. First, there were those whom the West Germans wanted to see leave the military within three months (that is, by December 31, 1990). They were promised a lump sum gratuity of between five thousand and seven thousand deutsche marks, based on their rank and service. The second category included officers whose services the Bundeswehr needed until most of the units to be disbanded had been dissolved. Finally, there were those who would be offered the chance to stay for a longer period.[14] Any from the last group who wanted to serve for an additional two years and then become a professional soldier had from October 1 to December 15 to apply. Original plans called for accepting up to twenty thousand professional and short-term regular soldiers, who would be offered a two-year contract. During that time they would go through a "testing period":

> On the one hand, it gives the NVA soldier the possibility to consider thoroughly the finality of his decision (further service or a release

> from duty), and on the other hand, it gives superiors and the personnel leadership, who are running this test, time for evaluating a soldier who was socialized in another system and in another army.[15]

Once the evaluation was complete, individuals could be accepted for conversion to regular Bundeswehr officers at any time. The rank a former NVA officer would be assigned in the Bundeswehr would be decided by the West Germans. As the relevant document noted: "The Federal Minister of Defense determines which rank [officers] may temporarily hold. He will take into account their conduct, training, length of service, career path, and function within the NVA and will place them in an appropriate rank in the Bundeswehr." Furthermore, it was made clear that professional or short-term regular soldiers would be released for a number of reasons: if they requested it, when their term of service ended, if they had violated human rights or the law, or if they had worked for the Stasi. Such individuals could also be released under other circumstances: if a professional soldier had served the minimal required time, if a soldier lacked technical qualifications or personal aptitude, if he was not needed, or if his position was eliminated.[16]

Schönbohm and his colleagues faced a difficult situation. On one hand, they needed former NVA soldiers—the number of Bundeswehr troops allocated to Kommando-Ost was insufficient to man the units they were taking over. One Bundeswehr officer who was sent to the east to reorganize an artillery division wrote:

> My main problem was manpower, or rather the lack of it. In all, I had more than 120 officers, 100 NCOs, 400 soldiers, and 100 civilians. My mission—to reorganize and transition the ex-NVA artillery organization into a Bundeswehr division artillery—could not be accomplished by myself. In addition to the ex-NVA manpower already mentioned, I had a team of West German officers: three lieutenant colonels, all of whom had already been artillery battalion commanders; one major; three captains; and one lieutenant. I also had two teams, each consisting of a captain and two warrant officers, who were responsible for basic training.[17]

In November, Stoltenberg stated that just to guard the munitions and weapons depots in East Germany, he would need more than the fifty-thousand-man limit imposed by the Bundestag's Budgetary Committee on October 24.[18]

In spite of the Bundeswehr's need for the services of these men, no one could promise them that if they stayed, their future would be guaranteed. Only a few would eventually be taken into the Bundeswehr permanently. Indeed, although an individual could apply to become a temporary soldier for two years, he had to be accepted by the Bundeswehr. Further service also would be decided by West German authorities. Schönbohm was in a quandary. As he himself said, "We needed the help of officers and NCOs from the NVA, but we couldn't deny that over the long haul we could take only a limited number of them into the Bundeswehr."[19]

Former NVA Members Respond

As October 3 approached, Admiral Theodor Hoffmann, the last commander of the NVA, was embittered by the whole process. Bonn had spoken about equality, but it was far from evident. "There was no longer even a hint of equal partnership, [and] also no reference to the right of former NVA members or institutions to have a say. All decisions were in the hands of the Minister of Defense and his deputies."[20] While one can understand Hoffmann's bitterness—which was shared by many other NVA officers—the fact was that the East Germans and their political system had lost. Why should the Bundeswehr permit former NVA personnel or the now nonexistent Ministry of Disarmament and Defense to have a say on such a touchy subject? Considering their former loyal service to the hated SED state, they were lucky that they were being given a chance to serve in the Bundeswehr at all.

Within the NVA morale continued to sink. On September 13, for example, Defense Minister Ranier Eppelmann went out of his way to deny reports that up to 60–80 percent of professional soldiers had resigned. At the same time, he admitted that if the current wave of resignations were to continue, that percentage could be reached by the end of the month.[21] The reasons for this low morale were not hard to find. Despite reports that the West Germans would take a number of NVA

officers into the Bundeswehr, the average officer and NCO knew only too well that this was problematical.

Former NVA soldiers faced a crisis. The prospect of being thrown out on the street with little or nothing to do at a time of high unemployment was especially sobering. A former NVA naval officer serving in the Bundeswehr toward the end of November captured the precariousness of the situation when he observed, "Soldiers may not stand on the streets because they know where the weapons and munitions are currently stored. I have a stomachache releasing soldiers and officers here in Rostock with an unemployment rate of 30 percent. They have to be employed, regardless of where."[22]

Schönbohm was fully aware of the problem and was earnest in his efforts to resolve it. He wrote: "Those soldiers who were forced to leave the armed forces should, to the degree possible, be given the opportunity to improve their transition to civilian life through career training programs.[23]

The Bundeswehr's approach to this problem was twofold. On one hand, Bonn continued to make it clear that it would not countenance any attempt on the part of its personnel to treat former NVA officers as second-class citizens. On September 24 the general inspector issued an order that stated:

> In accordance with the principles of the Unity Law, from the day of unification we are all soldiers of the Bundeswehr. I expect the duty of comradeship to be taken seriously. Our different backgrounds [*werdegänge*] and differences of opinion cannot be permitted to endanger the unification process. There may not be any sweeping judgements or prejudices. Radical forms of speech and behavior by individuals cannot be justified. . . . We can only bring about reorganization and change together.[24]

Defense Minister Stoltenberg reiterated this point in a speech he gave in early October, when he promised that there would be no Bundeswehr soldiers of "first and second class." Concerning differences in pay—Bundeswehr personnel from the west received higher pay than those from the

east—he assured his listeners that this would only exist during the transition period.[25]

Schönbohm would repeat this message over and over throughout his tenure at Kommando-Ost. He called for patience and "above all, understanding for the former soldiers of the NVA, who are under tremendous psychological pressure."[26] He never tired pointing out that former NVA soldiers—many of whom had lived for forty years under a communist dictatorship—"have the right to make a mistake."[27]

Operationalizing this lofty sentiment would not be easy. It required important concessions on the part of both sets of officers. It would also necessitate considerable understanding and patience as the East Germans became members of a democratic armed forces—at a time when they still harbored deep suspicions of their new colleagues. They would have to perform their duties in an exemplary fashion while learning to live in a new and confusing environment.

From the standpoint of the former NVA officers, no better person could have been chosen to carry out this difficult task than Jörg Schönbohm. Despite his earlier expressions of dislike, if not disdain, for what the NVA represented, once he had been given the task of incorporating former members of the NVA into the Bundeswehr, he devoted all of his efforts to ensuring that they were given a fair chance. He worked hard to make certain that their living conditions (which were abysmal) improved, while taking on those in Bonn who wanted little or nothing to do with former NVA personnel. Indeed, had it not been for Schönbohm, the world these officers and NCOs entered on October 3 would have looked and developed quite differently.

One of the first things Schönbohm did was to visit as much of the GDR as possible. He was determined to change the public attitude toward the military—fostered by many years of life with the NVA and the Soviet armed forces. Both militaries were closed to civilians. Military personnel kept to themselves, and there was minimal contact between the two groups. Schönbohm was out to change all of this. He and his fellow officers visited every town and spoke to every civic leader they could find. He wanted to convince the East German populace that the Bundeswehr was different from the NVA they had known—and he had some successes. For

example, on October 19, 1990, Schönbohm arranged for the oath taken by new recruits to take place in the center of a small town called Bad Salzungen. A few thousand people attended, and Schönbohm noted later that he had spoken with an Evangelical pastor who declined his invitation to be present on the platform while the ceremony took place. The pastor said he did not want to be part of a military "spectacular." After the ceremony, the pastor approached Schönbohm to say that the ceremony had been conducted much differently than he had expected. He remarked that perhaps everyone should be more flexible in dealing with each other. According to Schönbohm, "for me that was an encouraging experience."[28]

The Spoils: Equipment and Munitions

Few westerners, including many specialists, realized just how much equipment and what a large supply of munitions the GDR possessed prior to unification. Indeed, the liaison teams sent to the GDR soon discovered that the NVA had more firepower—including almost 300,000 tons of munitions—than the entire Bundeswehr, even though the latter was four times as large. The Bundeswehr also inherited 2,272 tanks, 7,831 armored vehicles, and 2,460 artillery pieces. In addition, the air force had about 400 planes and the navy around 60 ships. Finally, the Bundeswehr was now the proud owner of an additional 1.2 million hand weapons and around 100,000 motor vehicles.[29]

Even more impressive was the way in which this equipment was maintained: it received far better care than the military personnel who serviced it. For example, although there were problems with the heating systems in barracks, the equipment was kept in heated halls. As one article put it, "in the NVA technology and weapons were taken care of in a first-class manner; however, people played no role."[30] Schönbohm's most immediate task was to find a way to guard this massive acquisition.

The problems it would face in trying to guard NVA equipment should not have come as a complete surprise to the Bundeswehr. NVA officers had warned several weeks earlier that in view of disciplinary problems, they could not guarantee that weapons dumps were being guarded. Indeed, they spoke of increased thefts of weapons.[31] Bundeswehr officers assigned to the former GDR reported that "often munitions were not only in

bunkers, but since they were filled to capacity, munitions were stored in the open." In addition, electricity was often turned off to the high-tension wires surrounding the bunkers—a situation that required the assignment of greater numbers of soldiers as guards. The guardroom itself was in horrible condition.[32] It was soon discovered that just to secure the munitions would take far more men than anyone had expected. One source reported that the Bundeswehr had stated that eleven thousand soldiers were needed just to guard munitions.[33] In terms of morale, this made conditions worse. Conscripts were spending 40 percent of their time on guard duty—in contrast with the situation in the west, where a conscript spent only 5 percent of his time that way. The situation was so bad, according to Schönbohm, that not only were officers through the rank of captain being assigned to watch duty, but even staff officers found their names on watch lists.[34]

Things would get worse. Schönbohm's deputy, General Werner von Schewen, told of news he received at Christmas to the effect that all the qualified officers who were guarding munition and fuel dumps in the former GDR would leave the Bundeswehr by the end of the year.[35] There was a mad scramble to find enough Bundeswehr officers in the west to fill the gap.

The problems facing the Bundeswehr were made more difficult because the munitions were unstable and were not in the FRG's inventory. Thus there was a certain irony in Schönbohm's comment that "for the first time in my life as a soldier, I have too much ammunition."[36] Not only could he not use the ammunition, but given the limits placed on Germany by the Conventional Force Agreement, Bonn also had to find a way to eliminate munitions.

The East Germans had recognized the problem early on and had tried to give some of their weapons and munitions back to the Russians. The latter, however, were faced with their own problems and refused to accept them. The NVA made an effort to cut back the size of its inventory by donating some equipment to Third World countries. On September 1, for example, the Ministry of Disarmament and Defense reported that the GDR had given 65 heavy trucks, trailers, smaller trucks, and water-tank trucks, as well as camp kitchens and mobile homes, to Ethiopia, Angola,

and Mozambique.[37] In view of the amount of equipment on hand, however, such actions represented a drop in the bucket.

Bonn got rid of some of the NVA's equipment by passing it on to the United States for use during the Gulf War. Most of it consisted of trucks, water tanks, generators, engineering equipment, and chemical and biological warfare protective equipment. Altogether it was worth some $1.2 billion.[38]

One of the few weapons systems that the Bundeswehr decided to put into its inventory—on a temporary basis—was a squadron of 24 MIG-29s. The planes used more fuel than their western equivalents, but the opportunity to obtain world-class aircraft, together with the pilots and technicians to fly them and keep them in the air, was too good to pass up.

Bonn then decided to sell, give away, or destroy the thousands of tanks, helicopters, ships, and other items of equipment from the NVA. Transportation and armored personnel vehicles were sold to Sweden. Berlin gave armored personnel carriers to Pakistani peacekeepers in the former Yugoslavia, and other combat vehicles to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Mongolia. Bonn also supplied a considerable amount of equipment to relief agencies. According to one report, "in reply to 13,000 requests, some 7,000 well-mounted vehicles of all kinds, 3,000 trailers, a considerable amount of fire-fighting and disaster equipment, and 19 million pieces of clothing" were given to relief agencies.[39] Meantime, civilian contractors were employed to destroy the bulk of the equipment. By 1995, the process of getting rid of East German military equipment was nearly complete.

The NVA Professionals' Background

NVA officers came from a very different world from that of their West German colleagues. To begin with, it is worth emphasizing that the former NVA officers had been the sworn enemies of the Bundeswehr. As one former NVA air force officer put it, "Only a year and a half ago, I had Bundeswehr personnel in my radar sights. Now they're inviting us over."[40] In this sense, both former NVA officers and their Bundeswehr colleagues had been taught to view each other as potential enemies. There was an important difference, however. Former NVA professionals were being

asked not only to join but actively to support a system they had sworn to oppose for their entire service lives. Many Bundeswehr officers were fully aware that this placed the NVA professionals in a difficult situation. As one West German NCO observed, "How lucky I am to be standing on the right side."[41]

Most of the NVA officers claimed that although the party leadership had not succeeded "in creating a genuine hatred [*Feindbild*] toward the soldiers of the Bundeswehr," they would have been prepared to do their duty if they had been called upon. "I did not know whence the enemy would come, but if he were to cross our border, he would then be my enemy. That concept was clear."[42] At the same time, if there was one feeling toward the FRG that was prevalent among NVA professionals, it was jealousy—the "Wessis" had everything while the NVA officer had lived in a world of need for many years.

It is important to keep in mind that NVA personnel were far more isolated from everyday life than were their Bundeswehr colleagues. Not only was hatred of the West—and the FRG in particular—pounded into their heads almost daily, but they also were barred from watching Western television or listening to Western radios, from having contact with individuals from the West, and even from possessing Western currency. This does not mean that no one listened secretly to forbidden sources of information or that a soldier ran out of his apartment when a relative from the FRG came to visit. But a career military officer had much to lose. "The risk that one accepted in order to be better informed was not worth it to the officers." Everything in his life was directed toward the Soviet Union—his advanced education, his tactics, his strategy, and his force structure. In short, little information was available that would permit an officer to develop ideas in opposition to those advocated by the party leadership. Indeed, one source claimed that NVA officers were more poorly informed politically than the civilian population and on many occasions were "even less aware of what was going on in the outside world than those who lived in the same apartment house." Even trying to learn English could lead to unpleasant questions. Why does the officer want to go that route? Is he planning to defect?[43]

Another reason for the isolation of the NVA officer was the severe

military obligations that were placed on him. Combat readiness was much higher in the NVA than it was in any Western military, including the Bundeswehr. To gain some idea of just how prepared the NVA was for combat, consider the following. The NVA had eleven motorized divisions —six active and five in reserve. All could be in the field and ready to go within two to three days.[44] Or, as a former East German officer put it with regard to the active divisions, "each unit had to be ready to have 85 percent of its personnel and material fully combat ready and to be able to leave its base in 45 minutes, regardless of whether it was a weekday or a weekend or over Christmas or over Easter."[45] By contrast, the most the Bundeswehr ever had on alert (in the 1960s) was 30 percent of its troops.[46] On average, this meant that NVA officers put in more than sixty hours a week, and in some cases more than seventy-two.[47]

The NVA's high level of combat readiness began to slip in 1986 because of the increasing use of NVA troops in the civilian economy. Nevertheless, the important point is that the vast majority of officers (certainly those at the level of army captain or above) had spent most of their lives under these extreme conditions. Indeed, some would find it difficult to adjust to the much more lax life of a soldier in the Bundeswehr.

Another sign of how prepared the NVA was for the next war was the existence of medals already struck and ready to be awarded for a campaign in the west. The East Germans had even created shoulder boards for a "Marshall of the GDR"—a rank to be awarded to Erich Honecker, Interior Minister Erich Mielke, and Defense Minister Heinz Kessler.[48] In addition, East Berlin had created "doomsday" complexes to protect the country's political and military leadership.[49] Senior party officials also carried reserve commissions in the NVA, ready to assume their duties in a crisis.[50]

The crippling hours worked by NVA officers meant that time with their families was limited. The normal work day lasted at least ten to eleven hours and often was longer. For most, the idea of a Sunday afternoon free after two o'clock was the most that could be expected.[51] For the average soldier, the situation was even worse. "He had permission to leave the base once per week. A third of the air defense forces were in a constant state of combat readiness. The units of the air force had to be ready to

leave their base with completely loaded weapons systems and support equipment within two hours."[52]

Perhaps one of the most telling contrasts between the East German and West German military systems was the different way each handled duty at Christmas. During the holidays, 85 percent of Bundeswehr soldiers were at home on leave, while 85 percent of NVA personnel were at their barracks. Hans-Peter von Kirchbach, who commanded a former NVA division after October 3, wrote that the division he took over could be under way in less than sixty minutes. He also noted the presence of a Soviet alarm system right in the East German unit, which placed this unit under the direct control of the Kremlin in the event of a crisis.[53]

In short, the NVA was an "Army for war—a war machine. While in the Bundeswehr the individual occupied center stage, in the NVA everything was sacrificed for combat readiness."[54] From a political standpoint this meant, as a former NVA officer put it, that "all of our thoughts and actions were measured by combat readiness and combat capability." There was no time to worry about political issues, except at higher levels of rank or on a military staff. The same was true of ethical questions. "We had no time to think about things such as a soldier's truth or career ethics."[55] Duty came first.

There were at least two reasons behind this high level of combat readiness. First, from a political standpoint, it helped convince the Russians that the NVA was an indispensable ally in the event of war—after all, no other eastern European military force could have reacted so fast with such a formidable military force during a crisis. The GDR's military prowess, combined with its economic strength (when measured against other eastern European states) was aimed at convincing the Russians not to make a deal with Bonn at the expense of East Berlin. The second reason was that it kept officers from having time to think about political questions, while convincing the rank and file of the danger presented by the imperialistic West. After all, the NVA would not be in such a high state of alert if it were not being threatened by NATO and the FRG. Unfortunately, from the party's position, "these arguments stood on weak feet and on occasion were really primitive."[56]

In addition to imposing a very busy work schedule, the NVA was one

of the most heavily indoctrinated militaries in the entire Warsaw Pact. But it would oversimplify matters to assume that the average NVA officer was only "a loyal instrument of the communist dictatorship."[57] While some joined for ideological reasons, many young men became members of the NVA because they were enamored of the technology, the chance for adventure, or the opportunity to improve their standard of living. The party was always present, but it was not the all-consuming organization that many in the West believed it to be. There was a tendency to assume that the party was right, however, probably because that was the only view of reality these overworked officers encountered.

At the same time, the SED's ideology did not impregnate every aspect of an NVA officer's life. What the average NVA officer seems to have taken away was a belief in the rightness of socialism, and a commitment to a system that he believed was actively working for peace in Europe. According to one NVA officer, "to be a good soldier, one had to be a good socialist." Certainly there was the occasional "hundred-percenter"—the "SED Party Functionary in Uniform"—but as one West German observer put it, "I never encountered conviction in the sense of the 'real existing socialism,' [but] rather the belief that socialism was better than capitalism and that the NVA had contributed to peace through its contribution to the balance of forces."[58] For practical purposes this meant that the NVA officer was trained to go along with the general goals outlined by the party. He was a party soldier in the sense that he accepted the party's general guidelines, not because he was a fanatic communist. The longer he served, the more he accepted the party's presence as a fact of life—as something that was as much a part of military life as cleaning a rifle.

Regardless of how much an individual might have resisted fully accepting communist ideology, he was subject to party discipline. One East German officer who participated in a number of the events of 1989–1990 at a very high level hit the nail on the head when he observed that the reason NVA officers did not react creatively when the situation began to change prior to unification was "found in the policy of the SED, which, when it did not suppress independent thinking, still channelized it and offensively fought critical thinking."[59]

Anything that might create a sense of ideological pluralism—a situation in which a soldier might owe psychological allegiance to anything

outside this narrow party-military environment—was strongly discouraged. I have already spoken of the SED's efforts to isolate NVA officers from external influences. The situation was the same when it came to what the party considered "unhealthy" internal factors. Religion serves as a good example. The party leadership made it clear that such ideas "stopped at the door of a military facility."[60] Fewer than 10 percent of NVA officers were baptized. The party apparatus carried out an aggressive campaign against religious membership of any kind. No NVA officer could openly proclaim his allegiance to a religious community; if he did, he risked having his military career cut short. Indeed, the civilian population often viewed the military as a hotbed of anti-religious feeling. This strong sense of public mistrust of the NVA created serious problems for Schönbohm and Kommando-Ost. When the Bundeswehr first arrived in the east, many of the clergy and believers in the former GDR saw little difference between the NVA and the Bundeswehr when it came to hostility toward religion.

Another factor that served to isolate NVA personnel from their surrounding environment was the all-pervasive sense of secrecy. Everything that went on within the NVA was a secret—civilians often knew very little of what was happening in the military. As one former East German officer put it: "Every NVA facility was more or less viewed as secretive."[61] Contacts with the civilian world were also limited. A Bundeswehr officer wrote: "One lived mostly in residential areas built especially for NVA members. Contacts with the civilian populace were limited; one discovers in many places a state within a state. The press and public relations limited themselves to nice official statements."[62]

Life within the military was strictly regulated by the "need to know" philosophy. If a soldier did not require information to do his job, it would be withheld from him. Indeed, information was highly compartmentalized. Naval officers knew nothing about ground force capabilities, and even officers who were part of the ground forces had limited knowledge about a unit's operational plans. NVA officers were not trained to ask questions. After all, asking for information you might not be authorized to see could get you into serious trouble. Better to keep your mouth shut and mind your own business.

The result of this situation was that discussions—especially political

discussions—were more limited than they were in other communist militaries. NVA personnel were so atomized that the idea of discussing politics with fellow officers almost never arose. This was part of the reason, according to one study conducted in the GDR, why—in contrast to Poland and Hungary—military reform did not really take hold in the NVA. "Forces from the SED willing to consider reform were neither conceptually nor organizationally able to negotiate, to formulate the further development in the GDR of a politically relevant reform wing."[63] It seemed as if the majority of NVA officers were locked in a state of political unconsciousness. They were used to having others do their thinking for them.

Leadership Style

Another major difference between the NVA and the Bundeswehr was the relationship between superiors and subordinates. In the NVA, superiors were not approachable. When it came to dealing with senior officers—or officers at all if one were enlisted—"discussions . . . were a one-sided affair. Personal opinion was not a matter for debate."[64] Schönbohm ran into this sense of isolation in speaking to a number of former NVA officers. His open, easy-going, approachable style was new to them. As he described the situation: "And then one of the officers said to me, 'I have been an officer for eighteen years. The fact that I can talk so freely with a general is for me completely new.'"[65] This sense of isolation on the part of senior officers may have contributed to their different approach for dealing with subordinates.

Not only were NVA officers less approachable than their West German counterparts, they were also more numerous and carried out different functions. In the NVA, the ratio of officers to enlisted personnel was one to eight; in the Bundeswehr, it was one to forty.[66] As von Kirchbach put it: "In a division staff of the NVA, which controlled about 10,000 men, there were more officers than in a corps staff of the Bundeswehr, which was in charge of 70,000 men."[67] When it came to NCOs, the ratio in the NVA was one to one; in the Bundeswehr it was one to three. One observer estimated that 50 percent of the NVA officers were doing what NCOs did in the Bundeswehr.[68] Where the Bundeswehr delegated authority, the NVA

did not. In terms of an NCO corps, the NVA had nothing approaching the situation within the Bundeswehr. To quote another observer: "With the exception of warrant officers and senior NCOs, who had served for a long time, both in their own eyes as well as in the eyes of the officers they were a special kind of 'senior soldier'—they took on command and leadership positions only in exceptional circumstances."[69] By contrast, NCOs in the Bundeswehr were well known for their independence and self-confidence, something that was severely lacking in the NVA.

This top-heavy officer corps led to a much faster promotion rate in the NVA than in the Bundeswehr. Both factors made it necessary for the Bundeswehr to take two special steps: one to create an NCO corps and the other to equalize the officer rank structure between the two military forces.

Another area of considerable difference between the NVA and the Bundeswehr was discipline. In the NVA, the catchword was "blind obedience"; in fact it was part of the oath taken by every NVA soldier. As General Ulrich de Maiziere, the former inspector general of the Bundeswehr, put it, "The oath left no room for a conscience"—a situation which contrasted sharply with that in the Bundeswehr, where "conscience stood above an order."[70]

Indeed, life in the NVA was considerably more brutal than it was in the Bundeswehr. Von Kirchbach told the story of a man who came into his office after he had taken over in Eggesin. The man told of shoveling snow when two NVA officers approached. Because he was wearing an NVA jacket, he was mistaken for an NVA soldier. The two officers beat him so badly that he was hospitalized with serious injuries. Von Kirchbach said that he investigated the matter, and much to his surprise, he discovered that the man was telling the truth. The NVA officers thought the man was a soldier intentionally missing from a returning formation.[71] A Bundeswehr officer caught hitting a soldier in such a manner would have been dismissed from the service.

Life in the NVA was also characterized by a dual sense of morality. There was an officially accepted morality, and there was an individual's private morality. Applying the rules of private conscience to aspects of public life could be dangerous to one's career. For example, everyone recognized that the five-year plan was a joke. Statistics were notoriously

inaccurate, and no one seriously believed them. Nevertheless, officers had little choice but to parrot the official party line. If the party lecture, which soldiers had to attend, said that the GDR was ahead of the FRG in a particular area, the fact that the claim was inaccurate was irrelevant. After all, the idea of a free press was completely unknown. "In this climate, opportunistic personalities were created, which made it very difficult to build genuine comradely relationships."[72] Besides, if an individual did not play the game correctly, he had to deal with the possibility that his "incorrect" ideas would be reported to the so-called Abteilung 2000, populated by Stasi officers. Over the long run, those officers who were best at deception were often the most successful in their careers.

Another result of the aloof leadership style in the NVA was the harassment of junior conscripts by more senior ones. Called *dedovshchina* in the Russian military, this was a way of helping officers maintain discipline. More senior conscripts kept more junior ones in line by threats, promises, and intimidation. This permitted officers to remain above the fray—after all, the junior conscripts could always take comfort in the fact that they would eventually be senior conscripts, and then they could inflict their wrath on their own juniors. To quote one former East German officer: "In units filled with conscripts of varying service years, there was always discrimination and repression of the more junior ones. Neither discussions nor punishment helped. We were never able to deal correctly with this problem."[73] Indeed, the whole idea of law as it was understood in the West was something the NVA could never come to grips with. Law was for maintaining order and ensuring that the party's or government's wishes were carried out. "There were no legal principles that gave the member of the military any . . . political, social, cultural, or juridical rights vis-à-vis the state."[74]

From a military standpoint, the NVA's leadership style, in addition to the way it treated subordinates, was harmful because it stifled initiative. Since the leadership did not trust the rank and file, everything that was done was determined from above. This created a hopeless situation, as a former NVA officer noted: "The real absurdity came about because the same command authorities who drew up the littlest detail constantly demanded that all tasks be carried out creatively and with initiative."[75]

The NVA leadership—like their Soviet colleagues—never understood that overmanagement destroys initiative. Criticism was tolerated, but only to the degree that the facts and opinions were in agreement with the prevailing point of view.[76]

Creature Comforts

Another area in which the NVA and the Bundeswehr differed significantly was that of living conditions. Considering the incredible hours that NVA personnel put in, one might have expected NVA officers to go to great lengths to ensure that their people were treated properly. This certainly has been the approach taken in most Western militaries. In fact, the living conditions afforded enlisted NVA personnel were horrible. These were conscripts (as opposed to professional soldiers) about whom no one seemed to care. According to one report, a barracks had eight showers for more than 2,000 men![77] As another put it, "the bathrooms and the toilets were at the level of 1936."[78] And Schönbohm noted, "We had to close all of the 141 kitchens"—they were all far below Western standards.[79] Von Kirchbach's description of the NVA's barracks was especially graphic. "The rooms, washrooms, toilets are almost all completely in disrepair. They stink horribly. In spite of sometimes recognizable efforts to improve the situation with the means at hand, in general total structural and technical neglect is visible."[80] Other observers came to the same conclusions: "The living standards for soldiers were even worse. They had to be content with extremely old furniture, filthy washrooms and toilets and showers. There was a central shower building in the barracks, but it was closed for hygienic reasons and because the building was unsafe."[81]

Conclusion

Whether for good or ill, former members of the NVA were now part of the Bundeswehr. For some, the relationship would be short: they would be leaving for lives in the civilian world at the earliest opportunity. The seven thousand deutsche marks collected by those who left looked good to a lot of men, who saw the money as a way to start a new life.

Others, however, would opt to stay on in the Bundeswehr, to try to continue their military careers. It would be no easy undertaking. Not only

would they have to convince the West Germans of their military expertise, but they also would be required to prove that in spite of their very different background they could and would adapt to the world of the Bundeswehr. Making this transformation would be difficult and at times even humiliating. These were competent officers who had proved they could function in one of the world's most demanding military environments. Now they had not only to admit that much of what they had learned was wrong but also to learn to do things in a very different fashion. What was once right was now wrong—and vice-versa.

Not surprisingly, the post-1991 period was hard for the West Germans, too. At a time when the Bundeswehr itself was being downsized, they had to work with East Germans who had been their sworn enemies only months before. In spite of their years of learning to hate everything the NVA, as a party army, had stood for, these West Germans had to be prepared to defend their new colleagues against continued attacks from those in the Bundesrepublik who found the presence of former NVA personnel in the Bundeswehr an abomination. Indeed, there would be occasions when Schönbohm was locked in what seemed to an outsider to be mortal combat with the defense ministry in Bonn over how these newcomers were treated.

Patience would also be at a premium on the part of Bundeswehr officers serving in the east. When it came to bringing about the transition, it was these men who were on the front lines. They were the ones who would spend countless hours trying to reshape the remnants of the NVA into Bundeswehr soldiers. They did this knowing full well that many of their new colleagues would be forced to leave the unified German military regardless of how well they performed.

By 1998 there were only 4,797 former members of the NVA serving in the Bundeswehr.[82] Of this total, 1,343 were officers, the rest NCOs. Two officers were serving in senior command positions. And although there were few reports of conflict between Bundeswehr officers and those who had served in the NVA, a new problem had arisen that put former NVA professionals at a serious disadvantage. One of the keys to a good assignment was having friends and colleagues in the personnel department, but here were no former NVA professionals in such positions. There were

also signs that former NVA officers were being excluded from certain positions—such as teaching at Bundeswehr educational institutions—because of their background. Finally, senior officers such as Schönbohm and von Schewen, who had worked hard to help former members of the NVA adapt to the Bundeswehr, had left the military. Only von Kirchbach remained, but it was questionable how much assistance he could provide to these men.

If nothing else, a close look at the East German experience shows clearly the kinds of problems one can expect to encounter in "democratizing" former members of a communist military: a lack of initiative, an unwillingness to ask questions, a failure to understand Western ideas of leadership and discipline, an inclination toward brutality in handling subordinates, a tendency to leave politics to the politicians, a penchant for secrecy, a failure to treat enlisted personnel the way officers do in the West, and a tendency to accept the idea of a dual morality. Not all former communist militaries have encountered these problems to the same degree as the NVA, but it would be surprising indeed if a large number of them did not.

Notes

1. This chapter draws on my more detailed study of the last days of the NVA and the transition to the Bundeswehr. See Dale R. Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998).

2. See "Schönbohm befehlight zentrales Kommando," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 28 August 1990.

3. Based on Edgar Trost, "Probleme der Personalauswahl," in Dieter Farwick, *Ein Staat—Eine Armee* (Bonn: Report Verlag, 1992), 170–205.

4. Jörg Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland* (Berlin: Siedler, 1992), 31–32.

5. Trost, "Probleme der Personalauswahl," 176.

6. Hans Peter von Kirchbach, Manfred Meyers, and Victor Vogt, *Abenteuer Einheit* (Frankfurt am Main: Report Verlag, 1992), 48.

7. Friedrich Steinseifer, "Zusammenfügen und verkleinern," *Truppenpraxis* 1 (1991): 19.

8. Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland,* 47.

9. *Ibid.,* 33.

10. *Wessi* was a somewhat unflattering term used by East Germans to describe West Germans.

11. Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland,* 33. Emphasis in the original.

12. Cited in Trost, "Probleme der Personalauswahl," 184.

13. For the legal document setting up these categories as well as noting the responsibilities of former NVA personnel in the Bundeswehr, see "Die NVA im Einigungsvertrag," *Europäische Wehrkunde* 10 (1990): 572–573. See also Hermann Hagena, "NVA-Soldaten in der Bundeswehr: Integration—Nicht Resteverwertung," *Europäische Wehrkunde* 10 (1990): 568.

14. Hisso von Selle, "Going from East to West: The Ninth Panzer Division Artillery," *Field Artillery* (June 1993): 29.

15. Herbert König, "Bericht aus einer anderen Welt," *Truppenpraxis* 3 (1992): 234.

16. "Das Dienstverhältnis der Soldaten der Volksarmee soll ruhen," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 29 August 1990.

17. Von Selle, "Going from East to West," 28.

18. "Soldaten dürfen nicht auf der Strasse stehen," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 30 November 1990.

19. Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vatrland,* 33.

20. Theodore Hoffmann, *Das Letzte Kommando* (Berlin: Verlag E. S. Mittler & Sohn, 1993), 301.

21. "Soldiers Still Leaving NVA," *British Broadcasting Corporation,* 13 September 1990.

22. "Soldaten dürfen nicht auf der Strasse stehen."

23. Jörg Schönbohm, "Deutsche kommen zu Deutschen," in Farwick, *Ein Staat—Eine Armee,* 43.

24. Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland,* 39–40.

25. "Die Bundeswehr im beigetretenen Teil Deutschlands," *Soldat und Technik* 11 (1990): 780.

26. Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland,* 51.

27. "Die Einheit auch in der Bundeswehr gestalten," *Soldat und Technik* 11 (1990): 776.

28. Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland,* 92.

29. Wolfgang Gülich, "Der Prozess der deutsch–deutschen militärischen Vereinigung aus der Sicht eines Brigadekommandeurs in den neuen Bundesländern: Versuch einer ersten Bewertung," in Paul Klein and Rolf Zimmermann, eds., *Beispielhaft?* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1993), 24–25.

30. "Schönbohm klagt: Uns fehlen Unteroffiziere," *Die Welt,* 24 December 1990.

31. "Bonn: NVA-Bestände als Golfhilfe für die USA," *Die Welt,* 22–23 September 1990.

32. See von Kirchbach's discussion in "Die Kasernen," in von Kirchbach, Meyers, and Vogt, *Abenteuer Einheit,* 99–98.

33. "Noch 88 000 NVA: Soldaten im Dienst," *Süddeutsche Zeitung,* 8 November 1990.

34. Schönbohm, *Zwei Armeen und ein Vaterland,* 84.

35. Von Schewen, Tape 27 in Jürgen Eike, "Interwiews zum Film 'Die verschwundene Armee'" (taped interview made for a television program).

36. "East German Army Full of Surprises," *San Francisco Chronicle,* 14 December 1990.

37. "GDR Defense Ministry Donates Army Trucks, Equipment to Third World," *Inter Press Service,* 1 September 1990.

38. "Bonn: NVA-Bestände als Golfhilfe für die USA."

39. "Germany Disposes East's Assets; UN Gets Chunk of Communist Regime's Military Goods," *Defense News,* 13 March 1995.

40. "Bonn Braces for Absorption of East Germany's Army," *Los Angeles Times,* 30 September 1990.

41. Günter Holzweissig, "Auflösen: Ohne Rest?" *Deutschland Archiv* 10 (1990).

42. Frithjof Knabe, *Unter der Flagge des Gegners* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994), 103–104. The first comment was from a former NVA colonel, the second from a commander.

43. Günther Gillessen, "Die Armee die dabeistand," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 10 November 1990.

44. "Wir müßen unsere Feldwebel neu backen," *Die Welt,* 1 December 1990.

45. Ruediger Volk and Torsten Squarr, "Die innere Zustand der NVA," in Farwick, *Ein Staat—Eine Armee,* 257. Another source claims that a unit had to be able to leave its base combat-ready within one hour. See Herbert König, "Bericht aus einer anderen Welt," *Truppenpraxis* 3 (1992): 236. Regardless of which source is more accurate, the fact is that no Western army could have matched this reaction time. It could be attained only as NVA officers have suggested—if everything was subordinated to combat readiness. According to the former head of East Germany's ground forces, the Soviet military was at a 100-percent level of combat readiness. Since the NVA was closely integrated with Soviet forces, East Berlin was forced to maintain a high level of readiness as well. While this is probably true, the political benefits from such a highly prepared military within the Warsaw Pact and in East German–Russian relations is also significant. See Horst Stechbart, Tape 35 in Eike, "Interviews zum Film 'Die verschwundene Armee.'"

46. Von Schewen, Tape 27, in Eike, "Interviews zum Film 'Die verschwundene Armee.'"

47. Frau Dr. Pietsch, Tape 14 in Eike, "Interviews zum Film 'Die verschwundene Armee.'"

48. "Kein DDR-Marshall Honecker," in Volker Koop, *Erbe NVA: Eindrücke aus ihrer Geschichte und den Tagen der Wende.* 2d ed. (Waldbröl: Akademie der Bundeswehr für Information und Kommunikation, 1993), 126.

49. "Doomsday-Wandlitz lag bei Prenden," in Koop, *Erbe NVA,* 215–216.

50. In "Schnelldurchgang zum Offizier," in Koop, *Erbe NVA,* 138–140. Given the high level of professionalism within the NVA, such a practice could not help but create resentment on the part of regular officers. How could an individual who had attended only a three-month course expect to serve at the same level of

competency as an officer who spent ten to eleven hours every day carrying out his duties?

51. See Karl-Heinz Marschner, "Dienen bis zum Ende," in Farwick, *Ein Staat—Eine Armee,* 208.

52. Schönbohm, "Deutsche kommen zu Deutschen," 37.

53. Von Kirchbach, Meyers, and Vogt, *Abenteuer Einheit,* 85, 93–94, 97.

54. Dieter Farwick, "Einige Antworten," in Farwick, *Ein Staat—Eine Armee,* 305.

55. Lothar W. Breene-Wegener, "Kameraden oder Bösewichte?" *Truppenpraxis* 5 (1990): 440.

56. König, "Bericht aus einer anderen Welt," 236.

57. Brenne-Wegener, "Kameraden oder Bösewichte?" 442.

58. "Zur Einleitung," in M. Backerra, ed., *NVA: Ein Rueckblick fuer die Zukunft* (Koeln: Marksu Verlag, 1992), 14.

59. Hans-Werner Weber, "Gläubigkeit, Opportunismus und späte Zweifel: Anmerkungen zu den Veränderungen im politisch-moralischen Bewußtsein des Offizierskorps der NVA," in Backerra, *NVA,* 58.

60. Horst Prayon, "Die 'Feinde' von einst sollen Kameraden werden," *Europäische Wehrkunde* 11 (1990): 637.

61. Marschner, "Dienen bis zum Ende," 216.

62. Prayon, "Die 'Feinde' von einst sollen Kameraden werden," 637.

63. Hans-Joachim Reeb, "Wandel durch Annäherung," *Truppenpraxis* 2 (1991): 181.

64. Paul Klein, Ekerhard Lippert, and Georg-Maria Meyer, "Zur sozialen Befindlichkeit von Offizieren und Unterofizieren aus der ehemaligen Nationalen Volksarmee," in Klein and Zimmermann, *Beispielhaft* 56.

65. "Wir dienen demselben Vaterland," *Truppenpraxis* 4 (1991): 337.

66. Gillessen, "Die Armee die dabeistand."

67. "Personalfragen," *Abenteuer Einheit,* 79.

68. Von Selle, "Going from East to West," 30.

69. Klein, Lippert, and Meyer, "Zur sozialen," 54.

70. "Wert militärischer Tugenden entscheidet sich am Wofür," *Die Welt,* 12 October 1990.

71. "Schatten der Vergangenheit," in von Kirchbach, Meyers, and Vogt, *Abenteuer Einheit,* 132.

72. Hans-Joachim Reeb, "Eingliederung ehemaliger NVA-Berufssoldaten in die Bundeswehr," *Europaeische Wehrkunde* 8 (1990): 848.

73. König, "Bericht aus einer anderen Welt," 238.

74. Kurt Held, Heinz Friedrich, and Dagmar Pietsch, "Politische Bildung und Erziehung in der NVA," in Backerra, *NVA,* 227.

75. Marschner, "Dienen bis zum Ende," 210.

76. Klaus-Jürgen Engelien and Hans-Joachim Reeb, "Wer bist du—Kamerad?" *Truppenpraxis* 6 (1990): 652.

77. *Economist,* 22 August 92, 37.

78. Bernhard Ickenroth, "Der einstige 'Klassenfeind' in der Kaderschmiede für Politoffiziere der NVA," *Europäische Sichterheit* 5 (1991): 283.

79. "Schönbohm klagt: Uns fehlen Unteroffiziere," *Die Welt,* 24 December 1990.

80. Von Kirchbach, Meyers, and Vogt, *Abenteuer Einheit,* 36

81. Von Selle, "Going from East to West," 30–31.

82. Figures provided to this author by a former NVA officer.