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## Internecine Secret Service Wars Revisited: The Intelligence Career of Count Gerhard von Schwerin, 1945–1956

After several weeks of negative newspaper publicity surrounding Konrad Adenauer's security adviser, the former *General der Panzertruppe* Gerhard Graf von Schwerin,<sup>1</sup> the Federal Chancellor's Office in Bonn issued a brief press statement on 28 October 1950 that the Chancellor's adviser on technical security questions had undertaken activities in some areas which went beyond the tasks accorded to him. While phrased in diplomatic language, the statement concluded by announcing he had resigned.<sup>2</sup> So far, in both memoir material<sup>3</sup> and general historical works,<sup>4</sup> the ex-*Wehrmacht* general has gone down in history as a man who appeared from obscurity on 24 May 1950 to become Adenauer's adviser on security planning, only to disappear very rapidly into obscurity once again when, following indiscretions at a press conference, he was dismissed unceremoniously by the Chancellor from his position. Recently Schwerin has become much more than footnote in contemporary history, though, due to a bitter dispute which has divided the city of Aachen.<sup>5</sup>

The controversy has centred on the execution of two fourteen-year-old boys for looting by members of the 116th Panzer Division in the city on 13 September 1944, the division commanded at the time by none other than Gerhard Graf von Schwerin. What has made this case so explosive – even though the evidence did not link Schwerin directly with the shooting – was that it had been largely accepted in

<sup>1</sup> Gerhard Graf von Schwerin: born 23.6.1899, Hanover, died 29.10.1980, Rottach-Egern; Aug. 1914, Fähnrich, 2nd Garde-Regiment zu Fuß; June 1915, Leutnant; 1914–18, front-line service; 1919/20, service in various Freikorps; 1920–22, employed by private companies; July 1923, rejoins Reichswehr, 1. (preuß.) Infanterie-Regiment; May 1933, Hauptmann; Mar. 1937, Major; April 1939, Oberstleutnant; Aug. 1941, Oberst; Oct. 1942, Generalmajor; June 1943, Generalleutnant; April 1945, General der Panzertruppe; May–Oct. 1950, Adenauer's security adviser; 1956–69, Bonn office, Breda S.p.A., Brescia; 1970–80, lobbyist and adviser on arms exports to German companies, active in military and armaments committees of Free Democratic Party.

<sup>2</sup> ›Graf Schwerin entlassen‹, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 30.10.1950.

<sup>3</sup> See the brief reference in Ulrich de Maizière, *In der Pflicht. Lebensbericht eines deutschen Soldaten im 20. Jahrhundert* (Herford & Bonn, 1989), p. 141, and the more frequent references in Hans Speidel, *Aus unserer Zeit. Erinnerungen* (Berlin, 1977), pp. 253, 268, 274, 279.

<sup>4</sup> Henning Köhler, *Adenauer. Eine politische Biographie* (Berlin, 1994), pp. 637 f.; David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front: West German Rearmament in the Adenauer Era* (Chapel Hill & London, 1996), pp. 56–61, 97–103; Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Adenauer. Der Aufstieg: 1876–1952* (Stuttgart, 1986), pp. 738–43, 746–9, 755–7, 761, 768, 782; and, Arnulf Baring, *Außenpolitik in Adenauers Kanzlerdemokratie. Bonns Beitrag zur Europäischen Verteidigungsgemeinschaft* (Munich, 1969), pp. 21–31.

<sup>5</sup> Guido Baumann, Otto Bönnemann & Walter Meven, *Die Tragödie von Aachen. Die Hinrichtung von zwei Kindern* (Erlangen, 2003); ›Schwerin: Entscheidung spätestens im Juni. Kommission tagte zur Straßenumbenennung. Gutachten der RWTH soll Klarheit schaffen‹, *Aachener Nachrichten*, 11.1.2007; ›CDU gespalten in Sachen Schwerin-Straße‹, *Aachener Nachrichten*, 21.8.2007.

Aachen that Schwerin had sought to save the city from destruction on 13 September 1944 by attempting to surrender it to the advancing American forces. This had earned him the title of the ›Ritter von Aachen‹ which later evolved into the ›Retter von Aachen‹. Schwerin's name was entered in the ›Golden Book‹ of the city in 1957, and a street was named after him in 1963. But as a result of a report published by three historians at the Technical University Aachen, it was decided in 2007 by the *Stadtrat* of the city that the street should be renamed.<sup>6</sup>

Still, while the 2007 report was thoroughly researched, it concentrated on 13 September 1944, referring to other aspects of Schwerin's career only in a rather limited fashion. Schwerin's behaviour and statements in relation to Aachen cannot be fully understood, however, without taking into consideration other crucial elements in his biography, not least of all in relation to his post-war career. His own later attitude to his part in the events of 13 September 1944 was evidently influenced by the dynamics of veterans' politics, the controversy over rearmament and, most importantly, by the role he and other former generals played in the early security and intelligence politics of the Federal Republic. The public demolition of Schwerin's reputation is, in other words, not only of relevance for the continuing controversy over the crimes of the Wehrmacht in the Second World War.

Remarkably, historians have so far made nothing other than passing reference to Schwerin's career in intelligence after 1950, even though his fall from grace in October 1950 has often been explained in terms of British and American secret service competition.<sup>7</sup> This is in part due to the fact that in the historiography on the political battle over West German rearmament, particularly in the period from 1949 to 1956, little attention has been paid to the importance of intelligence organisations and the function of intelligence in general. While some recent work has been completed on the Gehlen Organisation,<sup>8</sup> even specific studies on the early battles between competing intelligence organisations have tended to focus on the three most controversial figures: Friedrich Wilhelm Heinz, Otto John and Reinhard Gehlen.<sup>9</sup> The lack of research has left not only a missing chapter in the very unusual

<sup>6</sup> See: Christoph Rass, René Rohrkamp & Peter M. Quadflieg, *General Graf von Schwerin und das Kriegsende in Aachen. Ereignis, Mythos, Analyse* (Aachen, 2007), esp. pp. 65–67, 75–88; also, W. Trees, »›Graf von Schwerin ist immer willkommen!‹«, *Aachener Volkszeitung*, 8.11.1975; ›Bevor Europa brannte, forderte Schwerin Härte gegen Hitler. AVZ sprach mit dem ›Retter von Aachen‹«, *Aachener Volkszeitung*, 27.6.1979; and, ›Schwerin-Straße wird umbenannt, *Aachener Nachrichten*, 10.8.2007.

<sup>7</sup> The report by Rass, Rohrkamp and Quadflieg mentions Schwerin's involvement with the CIA, but does not go into any detail or make use of the key intelligence sources. Rass, et al., *General Graf von Schwerin* (see n. 6), p. 66.

<sup>8</sup> Jens Wegener, ›Shaping Germany's Post-War Intelligence Service: The Gehlen Organization, the U.S. Army, and Central Intelligence, 1945–1949‹, *Journal of Intelligence History*, 7 (Summer 2007), pp. 41–59; and, idem, *Die Organisation Gehlen und die USA. Deutsch-amerikanische Geheimdienstbeziehungen 1945–1949* (Berlin, 2008). Both these studies draw heavily on a collection of documents, *Forging an Intelligence Partnership: CIA and the Origins of the BND, 1945–49. A Documentary History*, ed. Kevin C. Ruffner (2 vols., CIA, Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1999), recently made available on the National Security Archive website.

<sup>9</sup> For instance: Heinz Zolling & Hermann Höhne, *Pullach intern: General Gehlen und die Geschichte des Bundesnachrichtendienstes* (Hamburg, 1971); Georg Meyer, ›General Heusinger und die Organisation Gehlen‹, in Wolfgang Krieger & Jürgen Weber (eds.), *Spionage für den Frieden? Nachrichtendienste in Deutschland während des Kalten Krieges* (Munich & Landsberg, 1997), pp. 225–46; Susanne Meinel & Dieter Krüger, ›Der politische Weg von

military career of Schwerin, it also represents a general unwillingness by historians to confront many of the issues raised by the early intelligence history of the Federal Republic.

This article aims to fill a gap in the biography of Gerhard Graf von Schwerin, but will demonstrate at the same time the way in which intelligence affairs played a significant part in security policy-making in Adenauer's Republic.<sup>10</sup> It is directed in the first instance towards an examination of Gerhard Graf von Schwerin's relationship with British and American intelligence and its relevance to the interne-cine war waged between him and Reinhard Gehlen. In order to relate what is an extremely complex tale of intelligence cooperation and competition, the analysis of Schwerin's post-war intelligence career will examine: first, his immediate post-war interest in intelligence from May 1945 to May 1950; second, the intelligence dimension to his period as Adenauer's security adviser from 24 May to 28 October 1950; third, his activities after 1950, partly as a paid operative of the Central Intelligence Agency; and, fourth, his work as an informal adviser to two leading Federal German politicians. An examination of the general's post-war intelligence activities promises to throw new light on the nature of security and intelligence politics, including the role of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the US Army Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC), in the early Federal Republic of Germany, raising as well a number of intriguing questions about the reputation of the ›Retter von Aachen‹.

## I. Prelude, May 1945–May 1950

The first observation to be made about Schwerin's post-war career is that evidence exists of his desire to become involved in the Allied occupation regime well before May 1950 – specifically in the field of intelligence. As early as May 1945 Schwerin had written to the British Major-General, Kenneth Strong, Dwight D. Eisenhower's head of intelligence at Allied Supreme Headquarters, drawing his attention to a shadowy SS organisation, known by its cover-name as the *Havel Institut*, claiming that its agents may have still been operating in Russia. Although a G-2 Counter-Intelligence officer at Supreme Allied Headquarters thought initially that Schwerin's letter ›appears to offer opportunities of further exploitation‹, the Deputy Director at the War Room concluded that ›it would not be worthwhile to have von SCHWERIN further interrogated on CI lines.‹<sup>11</sup> Still, following his release from

Friedrich Wilhelm Heinz. Vom Freikorpskämpfer zum Leiter des Nachrichtendienstes im Bundeskanzleramt, *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 42 (1994), pp. 39–69.

<sup>10</sup> The analysis has been conducted without reference to the relevant files of the Gehlen Organisation, presumably still held by the *Bundesnachrichtendienst*. But with the creation of an ›Independent Commission‹ of four historians on 11 February 2011, it can be speculated that further insights into Schwerin's battle with Gehlen may emerge in due course. See here the webpage ›Geschichtsaufarbeitung‹, at [www.bnd.bund.de](http://www.bnd.bund.de).

<sup>11</sup> The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew (TNA), KV 2/522, Subject: Exploitation of Graf von SCHWERIN, Col. D.G. White to C.I. War Room, G-2 Division, Supreme HQ Allied Expeditionary Force Rear, 28.5.1945, and Robert Blum to Col. D.G. White, 15.6.1945.

American captivity in December 1947, he made another offer relating to intelligence policy, this time in April 1948, to the US Army Counter Intelligence Corps.<sup>12</sup>

The approach made by him was in the form of a paper proposing the establishment of an intelligence service. The document was given to a CIC Technical Specialist belonging to CIC Region IX (Bremen) by Schwerin. Region IX submitted the proposal to CIC Headquarters in Region VIII (Berlin) as part of a top secret report, dated 1 July 1948, accompanied by seven annexes detailing Schwerin's military career. His proposal was subsequently discussed by a Technical Specialist and a Special Agent on 4 October 1948.<sup>13</sup> The Executive Officer who signed the report concluded with the remark: 'The Technical Specialist, Region IX, is submitting the above because he believes that SCHWERIN's plan has merit and deserves careful consideration by higher authorities.'<sup>14</sup>

The basic idea behind Schwerin's proposal was that, in the face of an on-going Communist propaganda campaign, and as a result of mistakes made by the occupying Western powers, it was an urgent task 'to regain the confidence of the German people'. He felt that the Germans would need to be allowed to create their own intelligence service. The idea was not a fully functioning secret service, but rather an organisation designed to assist and support Allied military government, to be staffed and run solely by Germans. With the aim of conducting undercover research into German political attitudes under the protective hand of the Western Allies, he recommended, in addition to a central office in Frankfurt/Main, the creation of regional offices in Munich, Stuttgart, Cologne and Hamburg.<sup>15</sup> The plan and other documents relating to Schwerin's military career were studied in some detail by CIC. It seems likely that it was at this point that US military intelligence became aware of Schwerin's potential as a pro-Allied intelligence asset.<sup>16</sup>

Given that Schwerin spent most of the Second World War as an accomplished front-line commander – he was awarded the Iron Cross (First and Second Class), and the Knight's Cross with oak leaves and swords – where did this interest in intelligence affairs originate? He had attended the *Kriegsakademie* in Berlin from October 1933 to October 1935, while in 1938/39 he had served in the Army General Staff Department 'Foreign Armies West', basically an assignment in military intelligence. He had undertaken a trip to the United States for several months from late 1930 to early 1931, which he funded himself, and spoke both English and French reasonably fluently. Thus, during his pre-war career, which saw his rise from *Ober-*

<sup>12</sup> On the history of CIC, see Ian Sayer & Douglas Botting, *America's Secret Army: The Untold Story of the Counter Intelligence Corps* (New York & Toronto, 1989).

<sup>13</sup> US Army Intelligence & Security Command, Fort Meade, MD (USAISC), CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 88, HQ, CIC Region VIII, Maj. George L. Wilson to Commanding Officer, HQ, 7970th CIC Group, 7.10.1948.

<sup>14</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 90–93, HQ, CIC Region IX, to Commanding Officer, 7970th CIC Group, EUCOM, SUBJECT: German Information Service, 26[?].7.1948.

<sup>15</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 94–7, TOP SECRET, Proposal for Future Co-Work of German Nationals in the Intelligence Service of Allied Government in Germany, n.d. [1948]. For the original German manuscript, see Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich (IfZ), Nachlaß Gerhard Graf von Schwerin, ED 337/18, Vorschlag für die künftige Gestaltung deutscher Mitarbeit im Nachrichtendienst der Militärregierung, n.d. [1948].

<sup>16</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 89, SECRET. Graf Schwerin, 27.9.1948, fol. 87, Maj. Earl S. Browning (Director, Plans, Operations and Training) to Commanding Officer, CIC Region VIII, 7.10.1948.

*leutnant* to *Oberstleutnant*, he had received a degree of military training which qualified him for the acquisition and analysis of military information. What also appears to be in little doubt is that Schwerin was anything other than a typical officer: he was a soldier who often came into conflict with the military authorities.<sup>17</sup>

There was, though, a further dimension, namely his apparently pro-Western and anti-Nazi attitude, a point which the authors of the 2007 report on Schwerin's role in Aachen 1944 hotly dispute. According to them, a trip which Schwerin undertook to Britain in the summer of 1939, which was later portrayed as an attempt to identify the limits of British appeasement policy or warn about German intentions, cannot be identified as such other than by relying on Schwerin's own testimony. Moreover, they argue more generally that there is a complete lack of evidence to substantiate Schwerin's post-1945 claims about his critical stance towards the National Socialist regime.<sup>18</sup> Certainly, there is no absolutely conclusive evidence that he was removed from the General Staff as a result of his trip to England in 1939; nonetheless, there are several intelligence documents attesting to this interpretation, produced by individuals other than Schwerin himself.<sup>19</sup> The problem with the repeated scepticism towards Schwerin's statements about his own biography by Rass and his co-authors is that they have not consulted key British and American documents.<sup>20</sup>

The British and American files on his trip to England in 1939 take on a particular significance here. Schwerin arrived at Folkestone on 14 June 1939 and, although kept under close surveillance by M.I.5, he did make contact with a number of prominent industrial and political figures. Although M.I.5 assumed he had been sent 'to get atmosphere and information about the state of public opinion' in Britain, to find out more on the strength of the Royal Air Force and to ascertain British intentions in the Eastern Mediterranean, it seems he did make a positive impression on his British interlocutors.<sup>21</sup> After the war, due to his continued detention as a POW, some of those he had met intervened with the American authori-

<sup>17</sup> Although a biography of Schwerin is still to be written, substantive details can be found in Rass, et al., *General Graf von Schwerin* (see n. 6), esp. pp. 19–27. For further details: Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv, Freiburg i.Br. (BArch), PERS 6/353, Gerhard v. Schwerin personnel file; IfZ, ED 337/19, [Schwerin], 3-page summary of military career, n.d. [1951]; USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 200 f., Meldebogen, 16.6.1947, fol. 202 f., P.O.W. Form, 25.4.1946, fol. 204 f., Detention Report, 26.4.1945, fol. 211–6, Military Government of Germany. Fragebogen, [sgd.] Schwerin, 23.12.1947; Gabi Pelzer, interview with author, Hamburg, 13.10.2003.

<sup>18</sup> Rass, et al., *Gerhard Graf von Schwerin* (see n. 6), esp. pp. 8–11.

<sup>19</sup> The view that the trip in June 1939 led to Schwerin's removal from the General Staff is given in Michael Thomas, *Deutschland, England über alles. Rückkehr als englischer Besatzungsoffizier* (Munich, 1987), p. 262, but see also USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 45, 4/52, Gerhard Graf von Schwerin, 4.1.1952.

<sup>20</sup> According to an interrogation report on one of Schwerin's adjutants, the general had a thoroughly anti-Nazi attitude, disobeyed orders and was more concerned about the lives of his soldiers than military decorations. The fact the interrogation was conducted shortly after the officer's capture strengthens its credibility as a source. National Archives of the United States, Washington DC (NA) Record Group (RG) 165, Entry 179, Box 647, Notes on the Military History of General der Panzertruppen Gerhard Graf von Schwerin. Interrogation Report on Gerhard Lademann, Capt. Henderson, 200 Mobile Unit, CSDIC, 2.5.1945.

<sup>21</sup> TNA, KV 2/522, SECRET. Room 427, unnamed official to Brig. F.G. Beaumont-Nesbitt, 5.7.1939, and, von SCHWERIN, 16.6.1939, memorandum, [sgd.] Maj. D.W. Clarke.



ties to provide attestations of his anti-Nazi credentials. In an ›internal route slip‹ of the United States Army, HQ, European Theater, of March 1947, it was noted:

A number of private individuals in England have submitted petitions to the office, pointing out that he was known as anti-Nazi as far back as 1939 and inquiring whether anything could be done to expedite his release [...] Any action to expedite SCHWERIN's release, within the framework of existing directives and procedures, would be appreciated.<sup>22</sup>

While it could be argued that Schwerin sought to pretend he was an anti-Nazi figure in June 1939 as a way of gaining trust in order to extract more information, according to one British figure who met him, ›Schwerin was quite obviously anti-Nazi‹. In fact, he added, ›all those who met Schwerin were impressed by his outspokenness.‹<sup>23</sup> But what is important is that the attitude of British intelligence officers towards Schwerin after May 1945 shows that the trip in June 1939 cannot be separated from the story of his intelligence activities.

Furthermore, while the British were behind the effort to convince Konrad Adenauer he should appoint Schwerin as his security adviser,<sup>24</sup> the Americans may also have been in contact with him before May 1950. According to Schwerin's CIC file, he appears to have informed American intelligence that the newsletter, *Der Windhund*, which he edited for former members of his 116th Panzer Division, ›was British inspired and that each issue is proofread by the British before it goes to press.‹<sup>25</sup> As if to confirm the conclusion that *both* the British and Americans viewed Schwerin positively, an internal CIC summary of Schwerin's biography of March 1953 concluded: ›From information available it is believed that General von SCHWERIN is truly democratic in the Western sense and that he has been pro-British and American for the last 20 years.‹<sup>26</sup> Nonetheless, there was enough in Schwerin's biography before May 1950 which had the potential to be used to arouse suspicions in Bonn about his British connections.

Prior to his introduction to Adenauer through General Brian Robertson, Schwerin had been approached by a German-Jewish emigré and officer in the British Army, Michael Thomas, about the role of security adviser. Thomas assisted in organising a trip to England in mid-April 1950 so Schwerin could meet leading Conservative politicians and military figures to discuss German rearmament, among them Lord Astor, who had intervened on the general's behalf when he was an American POW. During his visit to England, he met the influential intelligence figure, Kenneth Strong, also Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick, and the Conservative politicians Major Peter Hodgins, Brigadier A.R.W. Low, Brigadier Anthony Head, Lord Bridge-

<sup>22</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 141, HQ, US Forces, European Theater, Internal Route Slip, SUBJECT: General Gerhard von SCHWERIN, 24.3.1947, [sgd.] A.F. Hennings.

<sup>23</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 144–6, ? [name sanitized] to Maj.-Gen. W.A. Burress, 1.2.1947.

<sup>24</sup> Roland G. Foerster, ›Innenpolitische Aspekte der Sicherheit Westdeutschlands 1947–1950‹, in MGFA (ed.), *Anfänge westdeutscher Sicherheitspolitik 1945–1956*, I (Munich, 1982), pp. 456–82.

<sup>25</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 66–8, HQ, EUCOM, Intelligence Division, to 66th CIC Detachment, Subject: Gerhard Graf von SCHWERIN and German Federal Police Force, 3.7.1950, enclosing two-page report, ECM 57-50, AMERICAN EYES ONLY, 28.7.1950, para. 2. The first issue of *Der Windhund* appeared in March 1950. See IfZ, ED 337/62, for copies of the newsletter from March 1950 to September 1953.

<sup>26</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 20 f., SECRET. Brief on Gerhard Graf von SCHWERIN, [signed] Col. C.H. Valentine, General Staff, G-2, 26.3.1953.

man, Lord Pakenham, and others. From Schwerin's correspondence with Rommel's former Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Hans Speidel, it is clear that the Federal government was likewise involved in arranging the visit, suggesting that by April 1950 the Count had already been earmarked for the post of Adenauer's security adviser.<sup>27</sup>

## II. Security Adviser to Adenauer, May–October 1950

While a few historians have referred to the intelligence dimension to Schwerin's work while head of the *Zentrale für Heimatdienst*, the cover name for his office adopted in August 1950,<sup>28</sup> the majority have tended to focus upon his involvement in security planning and the reasons for his dismissal by Adenauer on 28 October 1950. Although the causes of his fall are extremely complex, it has been suggested, most cogently by Hans-Peter Schwarz, that Adenauer suspected Schwerin of having been used by the British to promote ›their solution‹ to rearmament. In particular, the visit by Schwerin to London in April 1950 may have made him suspect in the eyes of the Chancellor.<sup>29</sup> Adenauer's own explanations varied. On 30 October 1950, he told the French High Commissioner M. François-Poncet that difficulties with his own party and the leader of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), Kurt Schumacher, ›had compelled him to dismiss Schwerin.‹<sup>30</sup> Yet at a meeting with all three Allied High Commissioners on 16 November, the Chancellor explained he had used Schwerin's dismissal to send a signal to all German generals that he would not allow a state within a state to emerge – in his view the general had started to involve himself in politics.<sup>31</sup> But did Adenauer suspect Schwerin of collaborating with British intelligence? And, do the intelligence dimensions to the general's work in Bonn make this explanation more credible – at least as a contributory factor in his dismissal?

Schwerin's involvement in the establishment of an intelligence service began not long after he had taken up office. In early June 1950, the former Major and son

<sup>27</sup> BArch, BW 9/3105, fol. 254 f., Notizen über Englandbesuch Graf von Schwerin, n.d.; Gabi Pelzer, interview with author, Hamburg, 13.10.2003. The dating of the visit can be established through correspondence with Schwerin and an oral history interview. IfZ, ED 337/30, Oberst i.G. Fischer to Schwerin, 26.1.1977, Schwerin to Fischer, 4.2.1977, and, Gespräch mit General a.D. Graf v. Schwerin am 15.3.1977.

<sup>28</sup> On the history of the *Zentrale für Heimatdienst*: Foerster, ›Innenpolitische Aspekte der Sicherheit Westdeutschlands‹ (see n. 24), pp. 544–70; Dieter Krüger, *Das Amt Blank. Die schwierige Gründung des Bundesministeriums für Verteidigung* (Freiburg i.Br., 1993), pp. 17–28; Alaric Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals, West German Society, and the Debate on Rearmament, 1949–1959* (Westport, CT, 2003), pp. 50–72.

<sup>29</sup> Schwarz, *Adenauer. Der Aufstieg* (see n. 4), pp. 827–9; Foerster, ›Innenpolitische Aspekte der Sicherheit Westdeutschlands‹ (see n. 24), pp. 458, 568; and, Florence Gauzy, ›Gescheiterte Versuche der deutschen Wiederbewaffnung 1950–1954‹, in Wolfgang Krieger (ed.), *Adenauer und die Wiederbewaffnung* (Bonn, 2000), pp. 14–16.

<sup>30</sup> Doc. 96, Sir O. Harvey (Paris) to Sir P. Dixon, 3.11.1950, in *Documents on British Policy Overseas* (DBPO), HMSO, 2nd series, III, *German Rearmament September – December 1950*, ed. Roger Bullen and M.E. Pelly (London, 1989), p. 245.

<sup>31</sup> Doc. 19, ›Wortprotokoll der Sitzung vom 16. November 1950‹, in *Adenauer und die Hohen Kommissare. Band I. 1949–1951*, ed. Hans-Peter Schwarz (Munich, 1989), p. 260.

of a leading 20 July conspirator, Achim Oster, called for the creation of a Federal intelligence agency, referring to it as ›an office for the protection of the constitution‹. His main concern was that a national agency be created to carry out surveillance within both German states. Schwerin approved of Oster's three-page memorandum, adding to it that he thought Oster himself ought to play a part in the ›Office for the Protection of the Constitution‹. He argued, however, that there should be a political information service for the Federal Chancellor which would be separate from the ›Office for the Protection of the Constitution‹, and here he identified Friedrich Wilhelm Heinz as the most suitable candidate. Moreover, he suggested that Oster could serve as a bridge between the main intelligence service and the smaller office of Heinz.<sup>32</sup> Oster's paper and Schwerin's addendum to it were a direct response to the latter's first meeting with Adenauer on 24 May 1950 and, at the same time, the de facto founding of an intelligence service within the *Zentrale für Heimatdienst*.<sup>33</sup>

In the following two months, a battle had to be waged by Schwerin and his two new intelligence recruits for financial resources in order that both Oster and Heinz could begin expanding their operations.<sup>34</sup> Nonetheless, despite the shoestring nature of both intelligence cells, by August 1950 Heinz was already generating a certain amount of material on military developments in Eastern Germany.<sup>35</sup> The two secret service units within the embryonic *Zentrale für Heimatdienst* were, though, not the only sources of intelligence which Schwerin was able to call on. On 5 August, the intelligence coordinator for the US High Commissioner in Germany, a certain ›Mr Hermsdorf‹ (an obvious alias), informed both Schwerin and Oster at a meeting that John J. McCloy had agreed to allow Schwerin access to official information and US military intelligence. This understanding was made dependent upon the agreement of the Federal Chancellor on behalf of whom Schwerin would receive the information.<sup>36</sup>

It should also be borne in mind that the first shot in the impending intelligence war between Gehlen and Schwerin had already been fired on 22 July. During a meeting with General George P. Hays, Deputy US High Commissioner for Germany, Schwerin had reported that he had heard from a member of Gehlen's organisation that there were unreliable individuals working in it due to the speed with which it had been created. An internal purge of the organisation was urgently required. Since it could not be expected that Gehlen would present any reform plans,

<sup>32</sup> BArch, BW 9/3108, fol. 4–6, Betrachtung über die Schaffung einer Nachrichtenstelle für die Bundesregierung, Bonn, Anfang Juni 1950, [sgd.] Oster, fol. 8, Gerhard Graf von Schwerin, Stellungnahme zur Vorlage ›Schaffung einer Nachrichtenstelle für die Bundesregierung‹, von Herrn A. OSTER, Bonn, 8.6.1950.

<sup>33</sup> For an outline of the evolution of the intelligence cell in Schwerin's office and its successor organization in the Blank Office, see Krüger, *Amt Blank* (see n. 28), pp. 71–7.

<sup>34</sup> BArch, BW 9/3108, fol. 49–51, Sofortmaßnahmen für den Aufbau des I-Dienstes, [sgd.] F.W. Heinz, 13.7.1950.

<sup>35</sup> Examples are at BArch, BW 9/3108, fol. 123–9, Die augenblickliche Stationierung der 8. Armee auf den Übungsplätzen ›Ohrdruf‹ und ›Kindl‹, 18.7.1950, fol. 137–41, Entwicklung und Stand der ›Volkspolizei‹, 23.7.1950, fol. 153–8, Beurteilung der militärischen Lage in der Sowjetunion mit Stand vom 15.8.1950, fol. 191 f., Betr.: Militärische Einheiten der Volkspolizei, 8.8.1950, fol. 277–82.

<sup>36</sup> BArch, BW 9/3108, fol. 63, Geheim. Aktennotiz vom 6.8.50, [sgd.] Graf von Schwerin, Oster.



Schwerin even asked whether Hays would be willing to accept his own plan.<sup>37</sup> Schwerin's major problem, though, was that – unbeknown to him – a number of former generals and staff officers had formed a conspiratorial group at the beginning of the year, which included two former generals close to Reinhard Gehlen, Adolf Heusinger and Hermann Foertsch, and Eberhard Wildermuth of the Free Democratic Party (FDP), the Federal Housing Minister in Adenauer's first cabinet.<sup>38</sup>

This group quickly established their own agenda, which aimed to promote rearmament and secure key positions of influence within the new state bureaucracy for those from within their circle or approved by them. Still, correspondence between Gehlen and Wildermuth shows that in early 1950 the Gehlen Organisation was extremely worried about its financial situation, it was anxious to receive top-level information from the centre of government and had clearly become agitated by the lack of any clear commitment to put the organisation on the payroll of the Federal government. Political discussions about the creation of ›Offices for the Protection of the Constitution‹ in each of the Federal states alarmed Gehlen, even though these were intended from the outset to be responsible for domestic security affairs.<sup>39</sup> Letters complaining about Schwerin's suitability for the post of security adviser were circulated to those who could make use of them, particularly Wildermuth.<sup>40</sup> The whispering against Schwerin by former officers was in essence a well-organised defamation campaign.<sup>41</sup>

As the domestic-political situation became ever more uncomfortable for Adenauer in the course of September and October 1950, there were a number of reasons why the Chancellor felt it politic to sack Schwerin. The official reason given was a press conference held on 19 October which had led to sensational newspaper reports; under pressure from Adenauer, Schwerin had ›resigned‹ on 28 October.<sup>42</sup> Writing to his friend Geyr von Schweppenburg over a decade later, Schwerin noted there were a number of explanations for his dismissal, ›although I cannot prove any of them‹. In addition to the domestic-political background, the creation of a small, independent intelligence service, which had within fourteen days identified the Russian offensive plans, angered Gehlen enormously. According to Schwerin, ›The immediate undercover work by Gehlen [...] proved itself to be rapid and extremely effective in the discrediting and defaming of my office and my person to the Chancellor and the leading political circles.‹ Then, as a result of the failure of the New York conference of the three Allied powers to agree to West German rearmament, and the passing of the immediate crisis in Korea, Adenauer's

<sup>37</sup> Doc. 97, ›Besprechung mit dem amerikanischen Stellvertretenden Hohen Kommissar Hays. Geh. 78/50. 22. Juli 1950‹, in *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. 1949/50. September 1949 bis Dezember 1950*, ed. Rainer A. Blasius (Munich, 1997), pp. 274–80.

<sup>38</sup> Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals* (see n. 28), pp. 50–52.

<sup>39</sup> For the goals of the group, see Bundesarchiv, Koblenz (BArch), Nachlaß Eberhard Wildermuth, NL 1251/7, Besprechungsplan, 5.1.1950, while the nervousness of Gehlen in early 1950 can be seen in Heinz-Eugen Eberbach to Roth [Wildermuth's secretary], 9.2.1950, 10.2.1950, and a second letter of 10.2.1950 and 31.3.1950.

<sup>40</sup> BArch, NL 1251/7, Hans Röttiger to Speidel, 14.7.1950.

<sup>41</sup> On the intensity of the campaign against Schwerin, see BArch, NL 1251/7a, Geyr to Wildermuth, 1.10.1950.

<sup>42</sup> Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals* (see n. 28), pp. 64–72.

political position became delicate, so dismissing Schwerin offered a welcome route out of the corner in which he found himself.<sup>43</sup>

How accurate, then, was Schwerin's version of events? Was the Gehlen Organisation attempting to force him from office? Or, was he trying to push a British solution to rearmament? The principal source for historians who have argued that Adenauer suspected Schwerin of being too close to the British is the record of a cabinet meeting held on 17 October 1950. Yet, immediately before Adenauer claimed that Schwerin was ›becoming too big for his boots‹, and that the ›English were attempting to draw him towards them‹, he also remarked that he wanted to place Schwerin under the authority of a CDU politician, Theodor Blank, who was soon to replace the general completely. There was no mention at this stage of dismissing Schwerin from Federal service. Then, later in the same cabinet meeting, Eberhard Wildermuth intervened, criticising the choice of Blank and arguing that the ›technical aspects‹ of rearmament would need to be solved, concluding with an attack on Schwerin.<sup>44</sup>

Significantly, documents in Wildermuth's papers provide clear evidence of the extent to which Schwerin was under fire from the Gehlen Organisation. As early as mid-August, the Organisation had communicated to Wildermuth that Gehlen was convinced that the former had ›exceeded the authority accorded to him‹ [!]. The letter contained menacing demands for a written denial that Wildermuth was involved in Schwerin's ›dirty double cross‹, clear threats that if Schwerin's activities were not controlled Gehlen would intervene, and it was also intimated that Schwerin would be placed under surveillance.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, not only was Wildermuth's secretary keeping tabs on Schwerin in Bonn, the Gehlen Organisation was soon doing everything it could to influence the composition of the experts' committee, which after some delay finally met clandestinely at a monastery in Himmerod in October.<sup>46</sup>

So, if there is evidence to support Schwerin's later claim that he was driven from office by the Gehlen Organisation, what does the documentary record tell us about the attitude of the Western Allies towards Schwerin? Certainly, in early July 1950 Schwerin appears to have been the cause of ruffled feathers between the British and the Americans. On 6 July, the American Ambassador in London wrote to the US Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, reporting on conversations with the British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, and Ivo Mallett of the German Section of the Foreign Office. The Americans expressed their concern over reports ›of unilateral discussions between HMG representatives and Germans concerning German police force and even rearmament of Germany.‹ In addition to the views of General Brian Robertson, Ambassador Douglas referred to ›conversations which von Schwerin

<sup>43</sup> IfZ, Nachlaß Leo Freiherr Geyr von Schweppenburg, ED 91/22, Schwerin to Geyr, 18.9.1964.

<sup>44</sup> ›Kabinettsitzung am 17. Oktober 1950‹, in *Die Kabinettsprotokolle der Bundesregierung. Band 3. 1950. Wortprotokolle*, ed. Hans Booms (Boppard a.Rh., 1986), pp. 56–61.

<sup>45</sup> BArch, NL 1251/7, Heinz-Eugen Eberbach to Dr Roth, 16.8.1950.

<sup>46</sup> BArch, NL 1251/7, Vermerk, 25.7.1950, [sgd.] Roth, Vermerk für Herrn Minister, 17.8.1950, [sgd.] Roth, Prof Dr Kurt Hesse to Wildermuth, 15.8.1950, and, Vermerk für Herrn Minister. Besprechung bei Prof. Hesse am 8.9.50; anwesend außer dem Unterzeichneten Herr Eberbach, 8.9.1950, [sgd.] Roth. See also Hans-Jürgen Rautenberg & Norbert Wiggershaus, ›Die »Himmeroder Denkschrift« vom Oktober 1950. Politische und militärische Überlegungen für einen Beitrag der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zur westeuropäischen Verteidigung‹, *Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen*, No. 21, 1/1977, pp. 135–206.

was reported to have had with British officials in London.<sup>47</sup> Two days later, Attlee denied that there had been ›any British discussions of remilitarization with Adenauer‹, but also pointed out that Kirkpatrick's conversations with Schwerin ›had been informal and had occurred because von Schwerin had been [a] useful prewar intelligence contact‹.<sup>47</sup>

In a draft of a proposed written reply (which was not sent) by Attlee to Douglas, however, the implication is very much that Kirkpatrick, who had been appointed British High Commissioner for Germany on 24 June, had spoken recently with Schwerin in Germany and it was stated that the contents of the conversation had been communicated to the US High Commissioner, John J. McCloy.<sup>48</sup> Yet the Americans had referred to conversations in London, most probably a reference to Schwerin's visit in April, although they did not mention the month. Given the efforts which were being undertaken by the Count's German opponents to discredit him, was it perhaps part of the Gehlen Organisation's plan to discredit him by sowing seeds of distrust with the Americans? There is even evidence of nervousness about Schwerin among Foreign Office officials in Whitehall at the end of August when they wrote to the High Commission at Wahnheide, asking: ›We should be glad of your comments on the genuineness of von Schwerin's anti-Nazi convictions‹.<sup>49</sup>

While the negative atmosphere of early July was soon forgotten, the fact remains that Schwerin did have British intelligence connections. This is exemplified by the visit paid to Schwerin in Bonn on 28 September 1950 by William Cavendish-Bentinck, who had been chairman of the Joint Intelligence Bureau during the Second World War, and at which confidential questions relating to rearmament were discussed.<sup>50</sup> More important was his close relationship to Major-General Kenneth Strong, who had retired from the British Army and was by this time the director of the Joint Intelligence Bureau in London.<sup>51</sup> A report made by Strong on a visit to Germany in the second week of October 1950 contains a considerable amount of highly sensitive material on, among other subjects, the clandestine conference of former military officers at Himmerod. Strong noted in his report: ›The conversations on events inside Germany were really a by-product of my visit and the information comes practically entirely from Graf von Schwerin‹.<sup>52</sup> Strong had got to know Schwerin before the outbreak of war in 1939, when both were serving in Ber-

<sup>47</sup> ›Telegram. US Ambassador in the UK (Douglas) to the Secretary of State‹, 6.7.1950, and note 2, with details of telegram 157, London to Washington, 8.7.1950, in *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1950, IV (Washington DC, 1980), pp. 695 f.

<sup>48</sup> TNA, FO 371/85050, C 4718 G, SECRET. PM/50/KY/41, draft letter from the Prime Minister to the US Ambassador (copy to Sir I. Kirkpatrick), 12.7.1950.

<sup>49</sup> TNA, FO 371/85088, Registry to Wahnheide, 31.8.[1950].

<sup>50</sup> BArch, BW 9/3105, fol. 182 f., Zentrale für Heimatdienst. Betr.: Besuch von Mr. Bill Cavendish-Bentinck, Bonn, den 28.9.1950. For biographical details on Bentinck, see Patrick Howarth, *Intelligence Chief Extraordinary: The Life of the Ninth Duke of Portland* (London, 1986).

<sup>51</sup> Kenneth Keith, ›Strong, Sir Kenneth William Dobson (1900–1982)‹, in *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Lord Blake and C.S. Nicholls (Oxford, 1990), pp. 383–5; Kenneth Strong, *Intelligence at the Top: The Recollections of an Intelligence Officer* (New York, 1969), pp. 299–309.

<sup>52</sup> ›TOP SECRET. Note for Air Marshal Sir William Elliot on Visit to Germany 7th–15th October 1950, [initialled by Strong], J.I.B., 20 October 1950‹, in DBPO, 2nd Series, III, *German Rearmament*, ed. Bullen and Pelly, microfiche 4, p. 332.

lin at the same time, Schwerin in the General Staff Department ›Foreign Armies West‹, Strong as assistant military attaché. It seems likely that Schwerin was the German officer who became ›indiscreet‹ during dinner table discussions in an effort to convince the British to stand firm against Hitler.<sup>53</sup> The trust shown by Schwerin towards Strong cannot be interpreted *per se* as an indication of a desire to implement British policy; but it is clear evidence of Schwerin's pro-Western attitude.

Considering the documentation available in Schwerin's CIC file, there is nonetheless a hint that the American military may have feared that Schwerin was in danger of supporting British policy. On 22 June 1950, one CIC source commented:

It is felt that the British wish to avoid war at any cost, at this time, because it might shatter the empire forever. They are probably fundamentally, though not openly, opposed to any significant German rearmament and their recent moves may be paradoxical – i.e., by getting the remilitarization ball rolling, they may intend to ultimately suppress any realistic remilitarization by holding out for a force limited to 5000–10 000 men.<sup>54</sup>

Yet such claims probably reflected concerns among circles of former German military officers, or could have been part of the Gehlen campaign to undermine Schwerin's position by reinforcing latent American worries. The statement as a summary of official British attitudes towards rearmament was accurate up to a point,<sup>55</sup> although the crucial question is whether Schwerin was viewed by the Americans as intent on supporting British policy objectives.

The fact that Schwerin was able to attend a dinner at the house of the Deputy British High Commissioner, Christopher Steel, on 11 October with Kenneth Strong, together with the American general George Hays, points more though towards Anglo-American cooperation in the discussion of the security issues surrounding Germany.<sup>56</sup> While not clear-cut, the evidence available does suggest that high-level American military policy-makers took Schwerin's views seriously and, hence, any suspicions about his loyalty cannot have been too great. In early October 1950, Schwerin's opinion that the Germans might agree to an American commander for their military contingent, so long as he was a ›name‹ general of high rank, was not only forwarded to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Omar Bradley, on 11 October, but also to the Commander-in-Chief, US European Command (EUCOM), General Thomas Handy.<sup>57</sup> That Schwerin wanted to pursue rearmament by first setting up border police units, and by making use of the service units as a

<sup>53</sup> Strong, *Intelligence at the Top* (see n. 51), pp. 28–71, and, on 97, Schwerin is referred to as ›an old friend of mine‹. Interesting is the comment in the M.I.5 file on Schwerin's visit to Britain in June 1939, ›We know that he is very indiscreet and a ›bon viveur‹‹. TNA, KV 2/522, SECRET. Note to M.I.5, [sgd.] Maj. K.V.B. Benfield, M.I.3b, 16.6.1939. It seems likely that this information came from the Military Attaché, or more likely Strong, the Assistant Military Attaché, in Berlin.

<sup>54</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 68, ECM 57-50, 28.6.1950, para. 11.

<sup>55</sup> Saki Dockrill, *Britain's Policy for West German Rearmament, 1950–1955* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 6–58; and, Spencer Mawby, *Containing Germany: Britain and the Arming of the Federal Republic* (London, 1999), pp. 20–52.

<sup>56</sup> BAArch, BW 9/3105, fol. 200, Zentrale für Heimatdienst. Vortragsnotiz, Bonn, den 23.10.1950.

<sup>57</sup> NA, RG 319, Entry 97, Box 22, Gen. Wade H. Haislip to Gen. Thomas T. Handy, 3.11.1950.

building block for future military forces, was hardly an unreasonable course to follow given the non-existent state of West German armed forces.<sup>58</sup> Thus, on the basis of the evidence available, it is an obvious conclusion that in the latter half of 1950 Schwerin cooperated with both the British and American military authorities. After all, his first memorandum on emergency planning was considered collectively by all three Allied High Commissioners at a meeting on 20 July.<sup>59</sup>

As a result of his high-level contacts, the US Army Counter Intelligence Corps not surprisingly developed an interest in him during the course of 1950. Their aim seems to have been to plant a source close to him to monitor his opinions and activities. A barely legible CIC incoming message marked ›PRIORITY‹, from Region VIII, the Berlin Headquarters, undated but clearly written in the summer of 1950, talks of ›definite objections [...] to Reg III interviewing source‹. A special agent was said to be flying to Frankfurt on 14 August for an interview with the source, the source obviously being Schwerin. The message stated: ›This will be crucial meeting to determine success or failure of penetration effort.‹<sup>60</sup> An evaluation sheet for a report (which has not been released) provides further evidence of CIC interest in Schwerin. Dated 13 December 1950, it was sent by CIC to the Operations Branch (presumably of EUCOM), the subject being the ›Dismissal of Count von Schwerin‹, the original report being dated 22 November 1950. Described as a Priority I category, it was ›late but useable‹, the reliability had been ›confirmed by other sources‹ and was ›probably true‹. The information in ›relation to target‹ had resulted from a ›partial penetration.‹<sup>61</sup>

What emerges from the evidence available is that CIC wished to keep their eyes on him. There are several reports submitted by a source identified as P-909 from Region III, the Frankfurt area. One reason why CIC had such an interest becomes clear when a memorandum is considered, written by Schwerin two weeks before his dismissal, on the subject of the Gehlen Organisation. Writing to Adenauer's foreign policy adviser in the Chancellor's Office, Herbert Blankenhorn, Schwerin pointed out that Gehlen's organisation was now in direct competition with the ›FWH-Service‹, run by Friedrich Wilhelm Heinz. He thought it inappropriate that a former general aspire to the leadership of a central intelligence organisation, particularly when he did not have the trust of the British or the French, and pointed out that the organisation had been built up too quickly and contained unreliable

<sup>58</sup> NA, RG 319, Entry 97, Box 21, TOP SECRET. J.C.S. 2124/22. Note by the Secretaries to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Logistical Aspects of German Rearmament, 23 Sept. 1950, esp. Annex »B«. A Plan for the Employment of German Labor Service Personnel in Phase 2 – Military Training to Include Training as Cadre for German Military Organizations.

<sup>59</sup> For the British reaction, see TNA, FO 371/85050, C 4747/271/18G, TOP SECRET, Übersetzung, Schwerin memorandum, and C 4747/G, TOP SECRET, HC/2065, Sir I. Kirkpatrick (Wahnerheide) to Sir D. St. Clair Grainer (FO, London), 21.7.1950. A discussion of Schwerin's memorandum was prepared in office of the US High Commission and copies sent from EUCOM to the State Department and General Collins, the US Army Chief of Staff. NA, RG 319, Entry 97, Box 22, Gen. Handy (HQ, EUCOM) to Gen. J. Lawton Collins (Washington), 9.8.1950, enclosing memorandum, Study of Effects of an Emergency upon West Germany, n.d. The German original is at BAArch, BW 9/3111, fol. 3–9, Memorandum zur Klärung der Grundlage für Sofortmassnahmen im Katastrophenfall, Bonn, 15.6.1950.

<sup>60</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 18, HQ, 66th CIC Group, Region VIII, incoming message (Priority), n.d. [probably Aug. 1950].

<sup>61</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 53 f., Confidential. Evaluation Sheet (13.12.1950), 66th CIC Detachment to Ops Branch, 13.12.1950.



elements. Finally, it had been founded with the assistance of the US Army Counter Intelligence Corps and contained elements which were dependent on them.<sup>62</sup>

Nevertheless, when all the available American intelligence material is considered, there seems little which suggests that either American military or intelligence officials were in any way involved in his dismissal, or that any alleged preference for British policy on rearmament and a 'border police solution' caused the American occupation authorities to recommend he be removed from office. The dismissal of Schwerin was an internal German affair, most likely – as Schwerin himself suspected – the result of a defamation campaign planned and carried out by the Gehlen Organisation.<sup>63</sup> The suggestion that Heinz was being funded by the British may also have been part of Gehlen's war against all those who stood in the way of his ambitions.<sup>64</sup> The fact Schwerin was to become a CIA operative only a few months after his dismissal by Adenauer also adds to the evidence that American intelligence had not concluded that he was clandestinely supporting British policy on rearmament.

### III. Schwerin and the CIA, 1951–54

After his dismissal by Adenauer, Schwerin continued to remain resident in Bonn. Making use of the contacts he had established both in the Federal capital and among the Western Allies, he was involved in a range of activities which brought him into contact with both German politicians and Allied occupation officials. Moreover, despite the campaign which had been waged against him in Bonn, he was able to maintain strong links with the intelligence cell in the 'Blank Office',<sup>65</sup> the successor to the *Zentrale für Heimatdienst*,<sup>66</sup> while at the same time acting as an agent for the Central Intelligence Agency. Although his role as a CIA agent has so far received no attention from historians, and despite the dearth of detailed accounts of the work of the CIA in occupied Germany and its relations with the Counter Intel-

<sup>62</sup> BArch, BW 9/3105, fol. 198, Zentrale für Heimatdienst. Streng Geheim! Vortragsnotiz. Für Herrn Min.Dir. Blankenhorn mit der Bitte um baldige Vortragsmöglichkeit, Bonn, 18.10.1950.

<sup>63</sup> This thesis would seem to be strengthened by a report on the press conference held by Schwerin on 19 October which is to be found among Wildermuth's papers. BArch, NL 1251/7, Gespräch mit Graf Schwerin, 31.10.1950, [sgd.] Roth, 3/11.

<sup>64</sup> BArch, NL 1251/7, Vermerk für Herrn Minister. Besprechung bei Prof. Hesse am 8.9.50, [sgd.] Roth.

<sup>65</sup> According to a file card in his CIC dossier, Schwerin's contact with the intelligence department of the Blank Office was still on-going in July 1954. USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 5, card index, von SCHWERIN, Graf [report unevaluated], 22.7.1954.

<sup>66</sup> The *Amt Blank* was named after Theodor Blank, the CDU politician chosen by Adenauer to manage the rearmament process. On the work and general history of the 'Blank Office', see: Krüger, *Amt Blank* (see n. 28), pp. 29–148; and, Wilhelm Meier-Dörnberg, 'Die Planung des Verteidigungsbeitrages der Bundesrepublik Deutschland im Rahmen der EVG', in MGFA (ed.), *Anfänge westdeutscher Sicherheitspolitik 1945–1956*, II (Munich, 1990), pp. 715–53.

ligence Corps, it is possible to provide a detailed analysis of his work for the agency on the basis of a range of diplomatic, military and intelligence agency sources.<sup>67</sup>

At some point between his dismissal in late October 1950 and early January the following year, he received a request from ›Mr Hermsdorf‹ in Frankfurt/Main to give an account of the background to the abortive press conference which had led to his fall.<sup>68</sup> As a member of the US High Commissioner's ›information service‹, ›Hermsdorf‹ had already liaised with Schwerin, passing on information originating from the American intelligence services, when as Adenauer's security adviser the Count had been allowed access to the ›official as well as the confidential information service of the US Headquarters in Heidelberg‹.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, by the end of 1950 Schwerin must have appeared to have been a highly attractive partner for the CIA since, not only had American policy turned around in favour of rearmament,<sup>70</sup> the agency had become acutely aware of the political implications of creating German armed forces. In an official CIA report of mid-December 1950, with which the intelligence organisations of the Department of State, the army, navy and air force had concurred, one of the major concerns of Schwerin was repeated, namely, that the ›introduction of a German military organization into the present West German scene will pose serious problems for future German political development along democratic lines‹.<sup>71</sup>

The fact that Schwerin could write on 26 August 1951, ›On Monday and Tuesday I will be travelling in the Ruhr area in order to place steel orders for the Italian company which produces the machine-guns for the Border Police‹, indicates clearly the degree of trust he continued to enjoy with the American military authorities.<sup>72</sup> Involvement in the ordering of weapons was in many ways a continuation of a meeting he had had with General Hays on 11 October 1950, while still serving as the head of the *Zentrale für Heimatdienst*. Then, Hays had discussed the options for arming the Federal border police with Schwerin, these being either producing the weapons in factories in the American zone, or transferring production to Swiss factories.<sup>73</sup> Further evidence of the confidence in him was the permission he re-

<sup>67</sup> In the available literature, there is little mention of the work of the CIA in Germany during the immediate post-war period, although the study originally produced for the Church Committee based on interviews and CIA historical studies is useful. ›History of the Central Intelligence Agency‹, in William M. Leary (ed.), *The Central Intelligence Agency: History and Documents* (Tuscaloosa, AL, 1984), pp. 13–119. For an overview of the period 1947–1953, see John Ranelagh, *The Agency: The Rise and Decline of the CIA* (London, 1986), pp. 160–228.

<sup>68</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Schwerin to Hermsdorf, 10.1.1951, responding to the request with an account of how and why the press conference was organised.

<sup>69</sup> BArch, BW 9/3108, fol. 63, Geheim. Aktennotiz vom 6.8.50. Betr.: Unterredung Gf Schwerin mit Mr. Hermsdorf, Mitglied des Informationsdienstes von Mr. McCloy, am 5.8.50 mittags.

<sup>70</sup> The shift in policy began towards the end of July, as indicated by ›The US High Commissioner for Germany (McCloy) to the Secretary of State, SECRET, Bonn, July 28, 1950‹ and ›Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, TOP SECRET, Washington, July 31, 1950‹, in *FRUS, 1950*, IV (see n. 47), pp. 701–3.

<sup>71</sup> NA, RG 319, Entry 95, Box 95, CIA/RR 37–50, The Political Implications of West German Military Contributions to Western European Defense, SECRET, CIA report of 11.12.1950, p. 4.

<sup>72</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Schwerin to Hermsdorf, 26.8.1951.

<sup>73</sup> Doc. 132, ›Aufzeichnung des Referenten Bökers. Streng Geheim! 11. Oktober 1950‹, in *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik [...] 1949/50* (see n. 37), pp. 378–80.

ceived to attend American manoeuvres in their occupation zone from 3–6 October 1951.<sup>74</sup>

It also emerges that a second visit which Schwerin made to England in July 1951 was undertaken with American support. Not only did he meet with leading British politicians John Hynd, Woodrow Wyatt, Brigadier A.R.W. Low and Lord Pakenham, but also Allen Dulles and Kenneth Strong. Upon his return, Schwerin was anxious that a meeting be arranged as soon as possible with Lieutenant-General Lucian K. Truscott, 'Special Consultant' to the US High Commissioner in Germany, so that he could report to him personally on a discussion which he had with Hervé Alphand, a French diplomatic official, over the concept of the Plevin Plan and his own views on French intentions.<sup>75</sup> On 21 July he communicated his impressions of the visit to the Federal government through an official in the *Auswärtiges Amt*. Not only did he go into considerable detail on the French fears of West German rearmament as explained by M. Alphand, he noted that many of their views were shared by his British guests. Two other points of significance were noted: first, Schwerin had met Kenneth Strong, and Allen Dulles (in London at the time), who had apparently complained strongly about Reinhard Gehlen's political ambitions and the competence of his organisation; second, Schwerin had also reported that Hynd had expressed worries about the negative attitude of the SPD to German rearmament and requested that he, Schwerin, try and use his influence with Kurt Schumacher.<sup>76</sup>

Proof of his employment by the CIA can be found in a document in his Counter Intelligence Corps file. Here it was also recorded that Schwerin, 'although no longer officially connected with the BLANK Office or any other Federal Government institution, is still actively engaged in advising certain governmental agencies, in particular the Federal Press and Information Office, on military problems past and future. He performs these services without remuneration.' It was noted that he was in the pay of the CIA, on a monthly salary of DM 750, with a further DM 700 for expenses. In addition, the CIA had provided him with a Volkswagen car, covering the petrol and repair costs as well. Apparently Schwerin had 'personal contact with members of the CIA', access to General Truscott and undertook 'exploratory trips' for the agency.<sup>77</sup> The car must have been provided some time after August 1951, as he wrote to Hermsdorf towards the end of that month: 'I need a car urgently and if you cannot manage to get hold of one – which would naturally be the best way – I will have to try and procure one some other way.'<sup>78</sup> Quite apart from the pay and car, access to Truscott was of immense significance because the general's status as a 'special consultant' was simply a cover for his true role:

<sup>74</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Office of the US High Commissioner in Germany, note of 3 Oct. 1951, Henry J. Huebner.

<sup>75</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Schwerin to Hermsdorf, 10 July and 22 July 1951. The second letter contains Schwerin's report on his visit, while the first requests an update on Washington's attitude to rearmament and information on an airfield from which to fly to England on 16 July. That the trip began on or around this date can be seen from IfZ, ED 91/29, Geyr to Schwerin, 14.7.1951.

<sup>76</sup> Doc. 133, 'Aufzeichnung des Referenten Bökers. Streng Geheim! 24. Juli 1951', in *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1951. 1. Januar bis 31. Dezember 1951*, ed. Rainer A. Blasius (Munich, 1999), pp. 437 f.

<sup>77</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 33, 137/52, SECRET, Gerhard Count von Schwerin, 18.4.1952.

<sup>78</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Schwerin to Hermsdorf, 26.8.1951.

taking up his duties on 8 February 1951, Lucian Truscott was the Senior Representative of the CIA in Germany, with headquarters in Frankfurt am Main.<sup>79</sup>

The preservation of copies of Schwerin's expenses chits in his private papers, together with the reports he produced for ›Hermsdorf‹, allow a fairly accurate picture of the length and extent of his activities for the agency. The first report is dated 6 May 1951, the final report 23 February 1953; the first claim for the reimbursement of expenses covers the period 29 May to 5 June 1951, the final one is dated 6 February 1953. He produced in total fifty-four reports about – and based on – information from ›circles of former soldiers‹, in addition to many other reports on a wide variety of topics.<sup>80</sup> These intelligence collection activities concentrated on three principal areas. The first covered a range of issues connected with the practical implementation of rearmament. The second area of activity was intelligence policy and, in particular, his continuing critique of the Gehlen Organisation. The third field was the extremely important issue of veterans' politics; he met with veterans, tested their opinions and took a strong interest in the activities of the soldiers' associations and their political goals.

In terms of the first field, the practical implementation of rearmament, there are a number of reports on attitudes among German war veterans working for the British and American occupation forces in the ›service units‹.<sup>81</sup> Some make plain the sensitivity of the issue, not least of all because it represented an area of concern for the Blank Office; yet, at the same time, the service units were under the command of Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, a clear reminder of Allied sovereignty over the Federal Republic in the field of security.<sup>82</sup> What is significant about these reports is that they show the service units were as much an issue of interest to the American occupation authorities, a corrective to the implication that they were seen only by the British as the core of a West German army in the event of a rapid escalation in tension with the East.<sup>83</sup> And, while Schwerin did occasionally engage in some of the more predictable fields of military intelligence,<sup>84</sup> when it came to the practicalities of rearmament his main focus was on its political and military viability. Hence, in one report on a visit to barracks of the Border Police in

<sup>79</sup> Wilson A. Heefner, *Dogface Soldier: The Life of General Lucian K. Truscott, Jr.* (Columbia & London, 2010), pp. 271–88, esp. 271 f. Truscott's CIA career (1951–58) only came to light in 1994, thirty years after his death.

<sup>80</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, contains a collection of travel reimbursement requests to Hermsdorf, May 1951 to Feb. 1953, and a number of reports, while a collection of typewritten reports by Schwerin can be found at ED 337/21.

<sup>81</sup> IfZ, ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 4 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten. Stellungnahme ehemaliger Soldaten im LSv (Labor Service) der US Zone zur Remilitarisierung, n.d. [1951], Bericht Nr. 6 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Frontsoldaten. Stellungnahme von Angehörigen der LSv der US Zone zu den am 5.6.51 gemachten Vorschläge von Angehörigen der brit. Zone, 25.6.1951, Bericht Nr. 12 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Frontsoldaten. Herstellung einer Arbeitsgemeinschaft innerhalb der deutschen Arbeitsdienste in der US und brit. Zone, 7.9.1951.

<sup>82</sup> IfZ, ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 22 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten. Deutscher Dienst-Organisation, n.d. [Dec. 1951], and Bericht Nr. 25 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten. Interessenvertretung der Arbeitsdienste bei den all. Besatzungsgruppen, 20.12.1951.

<sup>83</sup> For more on the ›service groups‹, Heinz-Ludger Borgert, Walter Sturm & Norbert Wiggershaus, *Dienstgruppen und westdeutscher Verteidigungsbeitrag. Vorüberlegungen zur Bewaffnung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Boppard a.Rh., 1982).

<sup>84</sup> Such as IfZ, ED 337/19, Erläuterung zu dem Bericht über russische Schildkrötenpanzer, 28.5.1951, a report on sightings made in the *Ostzone* of a new Russian heavy tank.

Lübeck, he noted that those who had been recruited wanted to serve as soldiers, not policemen.<sup>85</sup> In another two, on the attitude of German youth to the prospect of serving in a new army, he concluded that while agreeing in principle with rearmament the young men he had interviewed were ›critical and disillusioned‹, so it would be impossible to avoid ›a massive propaganda effort‹ in order to convince them of the necessity of rearmament.<sup>86</sup>

On matters of intelligence policy, these were often discussed in his correspondence with ›Hermsdorf‹. Some letters made reference to the ›Gehlen problem‹ and warned ›Hermsdorf‹ about a whispering campaign being conducted against the head of the *Amt für Verfassungsschutz*, Dr Otto John.<sup>87</sup> Schwerin also laid down in memoranda his views on the dangers posed by the Gehlen Organisation for the new democratic system, its efforts to become involved in domestic politics and its desire to influence personnel decisions on the leading positions in the future armed forces.<sup>88</sup> Even in reports ostensibly reflecting the views of former frontline soldiers, criticisms of the way in which the Blank Office appeared to be being turned into a ›sub-office‹ of the Gehlen Organisation can be found.<sup>89</sup> In only two reports did he address issues relating to developments in the Eastern zone of Germany (ironically what might have been most expected from a CIA operative), notably views on the significance of the *Volkspolizei*, one report the result of a ten-day visit to West Berlin.<sup>90</sup>

If we turn to Schwerin's behind-the-scenes involvement in veterans' politics, it can be seen that, during the course of 1951, he made a number of suggestions to the American military authorities, and reported on attitudes among veterans and developments within specific organizations. The reasons for this interest, as he made clear in a report of April 1951, was the desire to control wilder and more dangerous elements, but at the same time to achieve a ›moral mobilization‹ of the large number of soldiers which would be necessary for the German contingent. As he noted: ›It should be made clear that every effort should be undertaken to ensure that the mass of former German soldiers do not come under the influence of Eastern-oriented, anti-Western or democratically unreliable elements.‹<sup>91</sup> It is evident from his correspondence with his main collaborator among former generals in the field of veterans' politics, Leo Geyr von Schweppenburg, that he had made reports on veterans' affairs in 1951 to General Truscott; likewise, he was informed when material was passed directly to the US High Commissioner, John J. McCloy;

<sup>85</sup> IfZ, ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 2 aus Kreisen des Grenzschutzes, 27.7.1951.

<sup>86</sup> IfZ, ED 337/20, Gedanken der Jugendlichen zur Remilitarisierung, 21.5.1951, Bericht Nr. 2 aus Kreisen der Jugend. Stellungnahme zur Remilitarisierung, 13.6.1951.

<sup>87</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Schwerin to Hermsdorf, 25.5.1951, 10.7.1951, 31.10.1951 and 12.12.1951. On the history of the *Verfassungsschutz*, see Wolfgang Buschfort, *Geheime Hüter der Verfassung. Von der Düsseldorfer Informationsstelle zum ersten Verfassungsschutz der Bundesrepublik (1947–1961)* (Paderborn, 2004), esp. pp. 38–63, 120–25.

<sup>88</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, [Schwerin], Concerning: Organisation Gehlen, n.d. [1951], [Schwerin] Die Spitzenführung deutscher Kontingente, n.d. [1951].

<sup>89</sup> IfZ, ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 16 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Frontsoldaten, 24.10.1951.

<sup>90</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, [Schwerin], What can we learn in Western Germany by the Formation of the Volkspolizei? n.d. [1951], ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 21 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten. Berlin und die Ostzone, 4.12.1951.

<sup>91</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Vorschlag für die moralische Mobilisation der ehemaligen deutschen Soldaten, [sgd.] Graf von Schwerin, Bonn, 5.4.1951.



and, furthermore, he collaborated with the head of the Office for the Protection of the Constitution, Dr Otto John, and *Staatssekretär* Otto Lenz, on the issue.<sup>92</sup>

The worry about radical tendencies gaining ground among former soldiers was one of the main motivations behind a series of reports on the mood among veterans and in soldiers' organizations which Schwerin produced during 1951. These reports were based either on information from old regimental comrades, or his own ›field trips‹. In one of his first reports in early May 1951, he reported on the mood among veterans in Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein and North Hanover. Schwerin noted that there was a general acceptance and willingness to take part in the defence of the West. Former soldiers, however, distrusted the Allies' strategic intentions and felt that the government in Bonn was completely unable to tackle the problem of rearmament. The issue of the ›so-called war criminals‹ was also of some significance, as the ordinary soldier found it ›incomprehensible‹ that German field-m Marshals and generals could be held in Allied prisons. Interesting is that, following this sketch of the opinions of former soldiers, Schwerin felt it necessary to state: ›The author of this report does not share all the opinions described in the above report. His intention was simply to give a blunt and honest picture of current attitudes. This was the task assigned to him.‹<sup>93</sup> Still, he remarked a few weeks later that this report had had a ›sensational effect‹ on the Americans.<sup>94</sup>

What is interesting about these reports on veterans' attitudes is that while during May and June 1951 they usually took the form of a typical field agent's report, gradually they began to become a vehicle for Schwerin's views and recommendations and, subsequently, policy suggestions. The use of an intelligence report on veterans' views as a means of pushing his own ideas can be seen in a portrayal of a meeting with veterans aged between twenty-eight and thirty in Leverkusen on 26 June 1951. After assessing their willingness to take up arms again, Schwerin noted that ›all those present were in agreement‹ that a commander of the German contingent would have to be well-known and popular with the German people. Names such as von Vietinghoff, Halder, Speidel and Heusinger were dismissed as having little appeal, although it was noted that Heinz Guderian was a popular general whom the people would trust, who had a big heart for his soldiers and enjoyed great respect among former panzer-men. The report then claimed that the assembled soldiers had pointed out that Guderian had little political tact, no attachment to democracy and had been a loyal vassal of Hitler. Given that Schwerin had emphasised that a commanding general would have to possess the support of the Allies, it seems unlikely that the negative portrayal of Guderian actually originated from the soldiers themselves.<sup>95</sup>

Despite the range of Schwerin's activities for the CIA and the US High Commission, by late 1951 his main focus had clearly become the issue of the veterans' associations. He was no stranger to the problems associated with the founding of these organisations since he had become involved in veterans' affairs while serving as Adenauer's security adviser. During the course of 1951 a combination of fac-

<sup>92</sup> IfZ, ED 91/29, Schwerin to Geyr, 6.6.1951, 19.9.1951 and 30.11.1951.

<sup>93</sup> IfZ, ED 337/21, Stimmungsbericht aus Norddeutschland aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten, [sgd.] Graf von Schwerin, 6.5.1951.

<sup>94</sup> IfZ, ED 91/29, Schwerin to Geyr, 23.5.1951.

<sup>95</sup> IfZ, ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 7 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten. Das Problem der ›Gebrannten‹, 3.7.1951.

tors – most notably, a relaxation in Allied laws governing the founding of such associations, the more likely prospect of rearmament, and hence the rising interest in the issue of ›so-called war criminals‹ – veterans became much more active in founding old comrades' organisations. Among these, the ›tradition associations‹ of larger formations, most notably the Großdeutschland Panzer Corps, the Africa Corps and the Paratroopers, generated intense interest from a security point of view.<sup>96</sup>

Schwerin submitted reports to the CIA on the first reunions of the Großdeutschland and the Paratroopers' associations. In his report on the Großdeutschland meeting held in June 1951 in Kassel, he warned that there were certain elements within the organisation which would have to be watched. His report on the meeting of paratroopers, held in Braunschweig in late July, stated that, while there was a pronounced suspicion of political causes, the extreme right-wing *Sozialistische Reichspartei* might attempt to gain influence among these veterans.<sup>97</sup> It is interesting to note that the first report and others were passed to the Blank Office as well as to the CIA headquarters in Frankfurt;<sup>98</sup> and, there is evidence in Schwerin's correspondence that he was in close contact with Achim Oster, the head of the Blank Office's intelligence section.<sup>99</sup> This ›dual activity‹ was noticed by Counter Intelligence Corps officers, who learned from the source identified as P-909 that Schwerin had sent some of his reports to the shadow Defence Ministry in Bonn. This seems to have caused raised eyebrows among CIC officials, though not any undue alarm.<sup>100</sup>

By late 1951, Schwerin had come to be more closely involved in Federal German initiatives to prevent the *Verband deutscher Soldaten* (VDS), founded on 21 September 1951, from hi-jacking the veterans' movement for extreme right-wing political purposes. After a disastrous press conference held by the first president of the association, ex-*Generaloberst* Hans Friessner, Schwerin seized the opportunity together with his main collaborator in veterans' politics, Geyr von Schweppenburg, to initiate a separate umbrella organisation. The first meeting in Goslar failed to gain support, however, after the rumour began to circulate that the event had been funded with government money. Still, Schwerin and Geyr did not give up and switched their attentions to a recently revived soldiers' organisation, the *Kyffhäuserbund*, in an effort to continue their efforts against what they regarded as neo-Nazi

<sup>96</sup> On the history of veterans' associations in the early 1950s, see: Jay Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens: Former Wehrmacht Officers in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1945–1955* (Lincoln, NE & London, 2001), esp. pp. 33–123; Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals* (see n. 28), pp. 139–83; Bert-Oliver Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre. Die Rehabilitierung der Berufssoldaten in der frühen Bundesrepublik* (Göttingen, 2004), passim.

<sup>97</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Bericht über die Grossdeutschland-Tagung am 2. Juni in Kassel, 14.6.1951; ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 10 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Frontsoldaten. Das Fallschirm-Jäger Treffen am 28./29.7. in Braunschweig, 16.8.1951.

<sup>98</sup> BArch, BW 9/2122, fol. 138, for a copy of Schwerin's report of 14 June 1951 on the Grossdeutschland reunion, and BW 9/2123, fol. 231–6, Bericht über die Goslar Tagung der soldatischen Verbände, 10./11.11.1951, with the final page containing a comment by Schwerin on the document. The latter report can also be found in Schwerin's papers, IfZ, ED 337/21.

<sup>99</sup> IfZ, ED 91/22, Schwerin to Geyr, 12.5.1952.

<sup>100</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 32, Gerhard Count von SCHWERIN. Control of Information, 19.4.1952.

elements.<sup>101</sup> Schwerin provided further warnings during 1952 to the CIA of the dangers presented not only by the veterans' associations, but also by the attitude of Adenauer's government which had started to promote the idea of a unified soldiers' organisation because they sought the veterans' support in the forthcoming political battle over rearmament;<sup>102</sup> and, he reported on the activities of the VDS and the efforts to turn the *Kyffhäuserbund* into a form of political counter-weight.<sup>103</sup>

The last report on the subject of the politics of the veterans' associations, produced by Schwerin for the CIA in October 1952, reflected the fact that the issue had lost some of its previous urgency. The *Heimkehrerverband* had turned away from its earlier neo-Nazi direction and, he noted, that while the ›tradition associations‹ continued to grow numerically they had little interest in politics; essentially their main concern was comradeship. Even in the *Verband deutscher Soldaten*, despite support provided by the FDP and the *Deutsche Partei*, the mass of former soldiers did not want the organisation to become involved in politics.<sup>104</sup> In his final four reports, three of which were written in February 1953, he outlined the attitudes of former soldiers to the major political and international issues of the moment, particularly views on the hesitancy of the French towards the European Defence Community treaty and predictions on the results of the forthcoming *Bundestag* elections.<sup>105</sup> It is easy to see, though, that the value of Schwerin's information had by this time been seriously reduced as veterans had come to be perceived as less of a threat;<sup>106</sup> and, consequently, there were no more regular, paid reports for the CIA.

Still, the end of his report-writing may not have signalled the final conclusion to his contact with the agency. In a letter of May 1953, written in English by Schwerin to a Mr Kern, identified as the Director General of *Newsweek* magazine (almost certainly an alias for an intelligence contact), the former general outlined once again his thoughts on the Gehlen Organisation. His principal recommendation was that a selected number of military personnel could be accepted into Federal service once they had been screened by members of the ›Blank Office‹, but that a German intelligence agency ought to be integrated into the European Defence Community. He also recommended the disbandment of Gehlen's domestic, foreign policy and economic intelligence branches, and the creation of a Central Intelligence Office as a sub-division of the Chancellor's Office which would be under the supervision of

<sup>101</sup> Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals* (see n. 28), pp. 168–73; IfZ, ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 31 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten, 31.1.1952, and ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 34 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten, 19.2.1952.

<sup>102</sup> IfZ, ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 29 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten. Gefährdung der Einigungsbestrebung in den Soldatenbünden, n.d. [Jan. 1952].

<sup>103</sup> IfZ, ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 36 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten, 17.2.1952, Entwicklungen in den Soldatenbünden, 26.3.1952, Bericht Nr. 39 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten, 4.4.1952, Bericht Nr. 42 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten, 9.5.1952, and Bericht Nr. 46 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten, 16.7.1952.

<sup>104</sup> IfZ, ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 49 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten. Die Lage bei der Soldatenverbänden, 3.10.1952.

<sup>105</sup> IfZ, ED 337/21, Bericht Nr. 50 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten, 4.10.1952, Bericht Nr. 1/53 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten, 3.2.1953, Bericht Nr. 2/53 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten, 10.2.1953, and, Bericht Nr. 3/53 aus Kreisen ehemaliger Soldaten, 23.2.1953.

<sup>106</sup> See here, Alaric Searle, ›Veterans' Associations and Political Radicalism in West Germany, 1951–54: A Case Study of the Traditionsgemeinschaft Großdeutschland‹, *Canadian Journal of History*, 34 (1999), pp. 221–48.

a senior civil servant. He concluded the letter by requesting that ›Mr Kern‹ pass on his regards to Allen Dulles and Kenneth Strong.<sup>107</sup>

Was this a vain and last-gasp attempt by a discarded CIA operative to try and make use of influence which was no longer there – or, did he still have connections to Allen Dulles? Another document provides an interesting angle on this question, a report for the Gehlen Organisation from March 1954 which was based on information supplied by Hans Speidel. Returning from a trip to the United States and Britain, Schwerin had told Speidel on 2 March 1954 that his host had been Allen Dulles who had wanted to hear his opinion of the Gehlen Organisation. Schwerin had told him that Hans Globke (the civil servant seen by Schwerin as ›Gehlen's man‹ in the *Bundeskanzleramt*) and Adenauer had misused the organisation for domestic political purposes. He noted that he had had many conversations with Fritz Erler, a leading Social Democratic member of the *Bundestag*, on the subject.<sup>108</sup> That Schwerin was still spreading warnings about the activities of the Gehlen Organisation is hardly surprising. The full significance of Schwerin's CIA contacts only becomes fully apparent, however, when his conversations and correspondence with West German politicians are examined.

#### IV. Adviser to Federal Politicians, 1951–56

It was not simply through report-writing for the CIA that Schwerin was active in providing advice on rearmament and its intelligence dimensions. During his time as Adenauer's security adviser he had got to know the politicians Kurt Schumacher, Waldemar von Knoerringen and Heinrich Brüning.<sup>109</sup> Knoerringen had introduced Schwerin to Schumacher because he thought the general was ›a completely new type of soldier‹ who was serious about breaking with the old traditions.<sup>110</sup> Views expressed by Schumacher to Schwerin during a two-hour meeting on 7 June 1950 were communicated to Adenauer,<sup>111</sup> while meetings also took place between Schumacher and Schwerin on 2, 4 and 14 September and 4 and 10 October.<sup>112</sup> A meeting on 18 September between Schwerin and Alfred Gleisner, a member of the *Bundestag*, which had taken place on Schumacher's instructions, had though led to press reports suggesting that Schwerin's contact with the SPD

<sup>107</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, CONFIDENTIAL, Schwerin to Kern, 15.5.1953, and, Aktennotiz, 10.3.1954.

<sup>108</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Aktennotiz, 10.3.1954.

<sup>109</sup> BArch, BW 9/3105, fol. 31, Der Standpunkt von Herrn Dr. Schumacher in der Frage der Einschaltung der deutschen Bundesrepublik in die militärische Abwehrfront Europas (Unterredung am 7.6.50.), fol. 60–64, Aktennotiz über die zweite Besprechung Dr. Schumacher mit Graf von Schwerin am 19.7. nachmittags in der Privatwohnung Dr. Schumachers, 20.7.1950; Brüning to Gerd Bucerius, 16.11.1950, and Brüning to Hermann Pünder, 28.5.1952, in Heinrich Brüning, *Briefe 1946–1960* (Stuttgart, 1974), pp. 242, 308.

<sup>110</sup> BArch, BW 9/3105, fol. 80 f., III/VII/50/50/4a, Unterredung mit Herrn von Knoerringen, am 26.7.50.

<sup>111</sup> Doc. 68, ›Aufzeichnung des Beraters in Sicherheitsfragen, Graf von Schwerin, 8. Juni 1950‹, in *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik [...] 1949/50* (see n. 37), pp. 172 f.

<sup>112</sup> Lewis J. Edinger, *Kurt Schumacher: A Study in Personality and Political Behaviour* (Stanford, CA, 1965), p. 340.

politician showed that the opposition and the government were cooperating on the issue of the creation of a Federal police force, reports which must have irritated Adenauer.<sup>113</sup> But, even after his dismissal from government service, Schwerin continued to meet with Federal German politicians and high-ranking Allied occupation officials.

Despite his role as a CIA agent, the extent of Schwerin's access to Allied occupation officials, not to mention his meetings with prominent West German politicians, is still surprising. His CIC file provides some indication of the range of these contacts. It was reported in May 1952, for example, that he had visited an official at the US High Commissioner's Office, accompanied by former tank general Leo Geyr von Schweppenburg, 'in order to warn him of the dangers that might be embodied in unqualified German remilitarization.'<sup>114</sup> On the afternoon of 17 July 1952, Schwerin took part in 'an important meeting' of SPD parliamentary deputies relating to the parliamentary supervision of the Blank Office.<sup>115</sup> Moreover, it was also recorded that on 9 August 1952 he had attended a meeting in a private room of the Bonn Rowing Club with French military officials.<sup>116</sup>

Most striking is the way in which Schwerin's recommendations to the American occupation authorities, through his activities as a CIA agent, were repeated to leading Federal German politicians in various memoranda and personal meetings. Schwerin clearly made the most of his 'previous service as the military adviser in the Federal Chancellor's Office' which gave him 'certain experience and insight [...] which no other soldier possesses'. At the same time, he did not back any one political party at this stage, declaring that he felt himself to be 'politically independent and responsible only to the people', and 'responsible towards the common frontline soldier, regardless of whether he be an officer or an ordinary soldier'.<sup>117</sup> This stance must have struck a chord with the two politicians with whom he enjoyed close relations, the First World War veteran and leader of the Social Democratic Party until his death in 1952, Dr Kurt Schumacher, and the up-and-coming Bavarian politician, and the man who would become the second Federal Minister of Defence in October 1956, Franz Josef Strauß.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>113</sup> Doc. 71, 'Fraktionssitzung, 20.9.1950', in *Die SPD-Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag. Sitzungsprotokolle 1949–1957. Erster Halbband. 1.–181. Sitzung 1949–1953*, ed. Petra Weber (Düsseldorf, 1993), p. 171; Foerster, 'Innenpolitische Aspekte der Sicherheit Westdeutschlands' (see n. 24), pp. 546 f.

<sup>114</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 24, Ref.: D-284948, Subj.: The BLANK OFFICE, 28.5.1952.

<sup>115</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 24, Ref.: D-284948, Subj.: Bundestag Committee for BLANK OFFICE supervision, 4.8.1952.

<sup>116</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 24, Ref.: D-284948, Subj.: French-German Military Talks, 29.8.1952.

<sup>117</sup> Quotations taken from a draft letter at IfZ, ED 337/19, beginning, 'Sehr verehrter Herr Minister!', n.d. [probably 1951]. The draft carries the names of Minister Kaiser, Ministerpräsident Erhard, Ministerpräsident Arnhold and Member of the Bundestag Eugen Gerstenmeier.

<sup>118</sup> Contact between Schwerin and Schumacher is mentioned cursorily in Peter Merseburger, *Der schwierige Deutsche: Kurt Schumacher. Eine Biographie* (Stuttgart, 1995), p. 480, also in Thomas, *Deutschland, England über alles* (see n. 19), pp. 263 f. On Strauß, see: Stefan Fingler, *Franz Josef Strauß. Ein politisches Leben* (Munich, 2005), which, while referring briefly to Gehlen, pp. 214–7, makes no mention of Schwerin; and, Peter Siebenmorgen, 'Militär und zivile Politik: Die Rolle von Franz Josef Strauss', in Krieger (ed.), *Adenauer und die Wiederbewaffnung* (see n. 29), pp. 91–8.



On 28 March 1951 Schwerin charged one of his former military subordinates with the task of conveying to Schumacher on his behalf a series of thoughts relating to rearmament. At the following meeting on 5 April, the go-between outlined Schwerin's belief in the need for a people's army, but with a 20 % core of professional soldiers, his views on the problem of those veterans who it would not be possible to integrate into the new armed forces, on the Gehlen Organisation and, finally, on the speed with which the Russians were likely to develop a nuclear device. Schumacher noted that, for the SPD, ›how‹ rearmament would be approached would not be on the agenda until the issue of ›whether‹ rearmament should take place had been settled. On the question of the political ambitions of the Gehlen Organisation, Schumacher showed himself to be ›extraordinarily interested‹ and requested further information as soon as possible.<sup>119</sup>

On 23 April, Schwerin outlined in considerable detail what he knew about the Gehlen Organisation to his go-between. The information was then communicated to Schumacher in a meeting on 30 May 1951. Schwerin had passed on nothing short of a damning indictment of the activities of Reinhard Gehlen's organisation. He accused Gehlen of posing as a reformer in the field of intelligence, but equated his drive for centralisation as a dangerous political route, one which had led British intelligence to drop Gehlen like a hot potato. In the one-and-a-half-hour conversation with Schumacher, it was reported that the SPD leader had stated that he did not want the organisation integrated into the Federal state apparatus and it was communicated to Schwerin that Schumacher had become more open to a discussion of ›how‹ rearmament should be prepared.<sup>120</sup>

It does not appear, though, that any other meetings took place prior to Schumacher's death on 20 August 1952. Still, this did not mean the end of Schwerin's contact with the SPD since he enjoyed good relations with one of its leading security experts, Fritz Erler.<sup>121</sup> Erler clearly valued his contact with both Schwerin and Geyr von Schweppenburg, as both were willing to criticise the government's defence policy and were able to do so on the basis of their military experience. Geyr's views on ›a far too conservative approach to the inner spirit [of the new military] and a too one-sided personnel policy‹ not only accorded with Schwerin's opinions, but also those of Erler and the Social Democrats. Geyr probably also spoke for Schwerin when he wrote to Erler on 21 November 1952: ›Among the younger politicians in the *Bundestag*, I believe to have recognised so far two with a natural instinct and clear concept on fundamental military questions, these are Strauß and yourself.‹<sup>122</sup>

The basis for the cooperation between Schwerin and Strauß was laid in September 1951. The main subjects under consideration were – not surprisingly – those

<sup>119</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Aktenvermerk, [sgd.] Brandt, Bonn, 5.4.1951, with additional entry made on 8.4.1951.

<sup>120</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Aktenvermerk, [sgd.] Brandt, Bonn, 26.5.1951, and, Aktenvermerk, [sgd.] Brandt, Bonn, 2.6.1951.

<sup>121</sup> IfZ, ED 91/22, Schwerin to Geyr, 26.6.1952; Hans Ehlert, ›Innenpolitische Auseinandersetzungen um die Pariser Verträge und die Wehrverfassung 1954 bis 1956‹, in MGFA (ed.), *Anfänge westdeutscher Sicherheitspolitik*, III (Munich, 1993), p. 477. For the Social Democrats' policy on rearmament, see Gordon D. Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition, 1949–1960: The Case Against Rearmament* (Norman, OK, 1982), which does not however make any mention of Schwerin's cooperation with Erler.

<sup>122</sup> IfZ, ED 91/18, Erler to Geyr, 28.4.1953, and also Geyr to Erler, 21.11.1952, Erler to Geyr, 24.11.1952, Geyr to Erler, 28.11.1952 and 30.11.1952.

areas which were the subject of Schwerin's reflections in his reports for the CIA: veterans' associations, parliamentary control of the Blank Office, whether or not the creation of a Ministry of Defence was desirable and a range of other issues raised by rearmament.<sup>123</sup> Schwerin was obviously impressed by the young Bavarian politician. He confided in May 1952 to Hans Speier, an academic and consultant to the US State Department, that he regarded Strauß as one of the few parliamentary deputies willing to make an effort to ensure the creation of a democratic army.<sup>124</sup> While it is not clear exactly how often Schwerin met with Strauß in the following four years, copies of Schwerin's letters and memoranda to the politician have survived in the general's personal papers. Particularly interesting in the correspondence is the frequency with which intelligence issues were raised by Schwerin.

In a letter of October 1951 to Dr W.H. Scheidt, an associate of Strauß through whom the initial contact with the Bavarian politician was established, Schwerin mentioned what he feared were ›justified accusations‹ against Otto John. In a letter the following month, he raised several issues surrounding parliamentary control of the Gehlen Organisation. He suggested that the organisation be integrated organisationally into the planned European Army, that domestic security become the exclusive preserve of the *Amt für Verfassungsschutz* and that Reinhard Gehlen be forced to give up his ›branch offices‹ in Bonn and the regional states. He warned that, above all, the Office for the Protection of the Constitution and the Gehlen Organisation ought to complement not compete with one another. He closed the letter by stating that he would like to discuss ›this important and unfortunately very thorny subject‹ after his return from a ten-day trip to southern Germany.<sup>125</sup>

In December 1951, Schwerin began to write to Strauß personally, informing him of developments within veterans' organisations, suggested meetings with individuals with specialist knowledge of military affairs and reported on internal developments within the Blank Office. This line of communication was, moreover, not only in one direction;<sup>126</sup> and, Schwerin also sought on occasions to use his influence with the US occupation authorities on Strauß's behalf.<sup>127</sup> But his worries about the activities of the Gehlen Organisation and their possible effects remained a prominent subject.

<sup>123</sup> IfZ, ED 337/25, Schwerin to Dr W.H. Scheidt, 19.9.1951, Disposition für Unterredung Strauss-Scheidt, [Schwerin] n.d. [19.9.1951], Aufriss politischer Probleme in Zusammenhang mit der Aufstellung deutscher Kampfverbände, [Schwerin] n.d. [Sept. 1951].

<sup>124</sup> Hans Speier, *From the Ashes of Disgrace: A Journal from Germany, 1945–1955* (Amherst, MA, 1981), p. 158, summary of a conversation with Schwerin in Cologne, 19.5.1952.

<sup>125</sup> IfZ, ED 337/25, Schwerin to Scheidt, 29.10.1951 and 9.11.1951. In October, Schwerin also recommended to Geyr von Schweppenburg that he contact Strauß over the activities of former *Generaloberst* Hans Friessner in veterans' politics. IfZ, ED 91/22, Schwerin to Geyr, 26.10.1951.

<sup>126</sup> IfZ, ED 337/25, Schwerin to Strauß, 3.12.1951, 16.3.1952, 28.5.1952 and 23.6.1952; and also Gerhard Graf von Schwerin, Akten-Notiz, 18.7.1952, recording details of a conversation with Strauß on veterans' associations. Further indications of discussions with Strauß on veterans' organisations can be found at IfZ, ED91/22, Schwerin to Geyr, 28.6.1952.

<sup>127</sup> See, for instance, IfZ, ED 337/19, Betr.: Die Gesellschaft der Freunde Berlins – MdB Franz Josef Strauss, [sgd.] Schwerin, 18.10.1952, in which he pointed out that a newspaper article by a Communist journalist, known for his adherence to SED policy, had printed an inaccurate account of a speech given by Strauß to the ›Society of the Friends of Berlin‹ in June 1952. Schwerin obviously suspected a Communist defamation campaign against Strauß and sought to alert the US occupation authorities to this possibility.

In a memorandum for Strauß of August 1952, Schwerin reported that it had not been possible for more moderate generals to gain employment in the Blank Office. More alarmingly, he had ›very reliable information‹ that in a conversation with Theodor Blank Gehlen had stated that he had received confirmation from the highest political authority that it had been decided that his organisation, the *Amt für Verfassungsschutz*, and the ›FWH Service‹ within the Blank Office, would be placed under a unified command in which he would be the leading figure. Schwerin warned that were this to take place the Federal Republic would be advised by a US-financed intelligence service, and that a complete integration of the Gehlen Organisation into the state apparatus would bring individuals into positions of responsibility, such as former SD and OKW/OKH members, who were not predisposed to basic democratic principles. Schwerin concluded that demands would have to be made that the Gehlen Organisation be restricted to military intelligence work, that domestic security would remain the preserve of the *Verfassungsschutz*, and that the Chancellor be provided with a secret service chief who could guarantee the independence of the political and military intelligence being supplied to the Federal government.<sup>128</sup>

When placed within the wider intelligence context, this communication to Strauß is quite remarkable. At a time when he was in the pay of the CIA, and reporting to the agency's German headquarters in Frankfurt, Schwerin was simultaneously warning a leading West German politician of the dangers of an intelligence service which the CIA had been funding since 1 July 1949.<sup>129</sup> His CIA contact was, nonetheless, fully informed by Schwerin of the cooperation with Strauß.<sup>130</sup> It does in fact seem as if Strauß did give some credence to Schwerin's warnings; after all, his memoirs show him not to have been overly impressed with the capabilities of the Gehlen Organisation.<sup>131</sup> And, as it turned out, although Gehlen appeared to have won the upper hand in 1953 when Friedrich Wilhelm Heinz was dismissed on 1 October, reinforced by the Otto John defection scandal in July 1954, the political tide gradually began to turn against Gehlen, and his plans to take full control of Federal intelligence were slowly worn down by strong parliamentary resistance.<sup>132</sup>

Schwerin's supply of sensitive information to Strauß continued in December 1952 when he wrote to him reporting on developments in the field of future weapons production, noting that as a result of an agreement between the Blank Office and the Federal Economics Ministry the former would be in charge of awarding contracts for weapons. While the subject was highly sensitive in its implications

<sup>128</sup> IfZ, ED 337/25, Forderungen für den weiteren Aufbau des Amtes Blank. Memorandum für Herrn Strauss, Stuttgart, 16.8.1952.

<sup>129</sup> It can be assumed that this financial support continued at least until the cabinet decision on 11.7.1955 to turn the organisation into a Federal agency. The organisation finally became the *Bundesnachrichtendienst* on 1.4.1956. Reinhard Gehlen, *Der Dienst. Erinnerungen 1942–1971* (Mainz, 1971), pp. 170–76, 220–23.

<sup>130</sup> IfZ, ED 337/19, Schwerin to Hermsdorf, 19.2.1952, writing that, ›the cooperation with Herr Strauss continues to be good and pleasing‹.

<sup>131</sup> Franz Josef Strauß, *Die Erinnerungen* (Berlin, 1989), pp. 357 f.

<sup>132</sup> Susanne Meinel, ›Im Mahlstrohm des Kalten Krieges. Friedrich Wilhelm Heinz und die Anfänge der westdeutschen Nachrichtendienstes 1945–1955‹, in Krieger & Weber (eds.), *Spionage für den Frieden?* (see n. 9), pp. 247–66; Otto John, *Zweimal kam ich heim. Vom Verschwörer zum Schützer der Verfassung* (Düsseldorf, 1969), pp. 259–330; and, Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals* (see n. 28), pp. 108–10.

for future civil-military relations, Schwerin's knowledge of developments indicated just how good his contacts in the Blank Office were.<sup>133</sup> In January 1953, he reported that the French general Edgard de Larminat had collated material made available to him by German citizens in order to prepare a case against the European Defence Community Treaty. In the same month, he sent a note to Strauß that a 'member of the CIA reported to me' that the new American government would not use Berlin as an 'object to barter with' when it came to negotiating peace in Korea.<sup>134</sup>

Schwerin's ability to pass on to Franz Josef Strauß secret material, drawn from Federal German and American intelligence sources, was obviously an attempt to secure access to the rising young star in Bonn, a man who had by 1953 already carved out something of a niche for himself in security politics. The fact that Schwerin could draw on intelligence sources, combined with his own firm grasp of military affairs, clearly made him an important contact for the burly Bavarian, although Schwerin's papers indicate that the flow of information to Strauß appears to have petered out by early 1954.<sup>135</sup> The contact did not break off completely, however. In mid-1954, Schwerin sent Strauß a paper outlining his views on the future defence of the Federal Republic of Germany. The existence of the paper was registered by US Army intelligence, as attested to by an entry in Schwerin's CIC file.<sup>136</sup> He also produced other memoranda in 1954, including detailed suggestions on parliamentary control of the Federal Republic's intelligence services and on developments in weapons procurement.<sup>137</sup>

While there appears to have been no contact between Schwerin and Strauß in 1955, when the latter became Minister of Defence in October 1956 Schwerin reappeared as an adviser. It is worth noting that in his memoirs Strauß did not seem very anxious to acknowledge their previous contact, merely commenting that on becoming Minister of Defence he had contacted Schwerin so the general could advise him on questions relating to the Border Police.<sup>138</sup> There is little correspondence through which further conclusions can be drawn, other than a draft of a letter by Schwerin to Strauß in which the former general refers to a meeting between the two and thanks the minister for 'the trust which you have once again shown towards me'.<sup>139</sup> But two memoranda from October 1956 are clearly addressed to the new Minister of Defence and provide evidence that Strauß did use Schwerin once

<sup>133</sup> IfZ, ED 337/25, Schwerin to Strauß, 10.12.1952.

<sup>134</sup> IfZ, ED 337/25, Streng vertraulich. Vortragsnotiz für Herrn Fr.J. Strauss MdB, 14.1.1953, [sgd.] Schwerin, and, Streng vertraulich. Vortragsnotiz für Herrn Fr.J. Strauss MdB, 16.1.1953, [sgd.] Schwerin.

<sup>135</sup> IfZ, ED 337/25, Streng Vertraulich. Vortrags-Notiz. Betr.: Zivile Kontrolle der amerikanischen Wehrmacht, Bonn, 4.5.1953, [sgd.] Schwerin, Aktennotiz, 25.1.1954, Schwerin to Strauß, 2.2.1954, and Strauß to Schwerin, 10.2.1954.

<sup>136</sup> IfZ, ED 337/24, Schwerin, Vortragsnotiz. Betr.: Organisation der Landes-Verteidigung, 20.6.1954; USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 19, Military Plan for West German Defense of Homeland, 30.7.1954.

<sup>137</sup> IfZ, ED 337/24, Grundlegende Ausführungen über die auf dem Gebiet der Bundesrepublik arbeitenden Nachrichtendienste als Arbeitsgrundlage für Ausführungen in der EWK, n.d. [probably 1954], Streng Vertraulich. Vortrags-Notiz. Betr.: Deutschland – Vertretung Herrn Bührle sen. Oerlikon/Schweiz, 12.7.1954, Memorandum. Betr.: Vorarbeiten für die Entwicklung neuer Waffen, 19.1.1954.

<sup>138</sup> Strauß, *Die Erinnerungen* (see n. 131), p. 285, referring to Schwerin's advice on the issue of whether the Border Police should be integrated into the *Bundeswehr*.

<sup>139</sup> IfZ, ED 337/26, Schwerin to Strauß, n.d. [probably late 1956].

again as an adviser.<sup>140</sup> Strauß never called Schwerin to serve in the *Bundeswehr*, however, although the latter had passed the Personnel Screening Board. While other considerations may also have played a role, it could be speculated that – from Strauß's perspective – Schwerin quite simply knew too much.<sup>141</sup>

## V. Conclusion

This account of the post-war intelligence career of Count Gerhard von Schwerin has shown conclusively that the claim that the press conference on 19 October 1950 led to the final point of the short second career of the Count, whom Adenauer had wanted rid of for some time,<sup>142</sup> is unsustainable in the face of the documentary record. Schwerin's intelligence activities involved the founding of the two intelligence cells in the *Zentrale für Heimatdienst*, later active support for their operations after they were integrated into the *Amt Blank*, acting as a CIA operative and advising several key Federal politicians on intelligence policy. That he was involved for a longer period than has hitherto been realised in alerting both the Western Allies and Federal politicians to his fears about the Gehlen Organisation suggests that this on-going critique may well have contributed to the failure of Gehlen's plans for control of Federal intelligence. His close cooperation with the American military and the CIA certainly calls into question the implication by some historians that Schwerin was a minor figure, viewed as not very capable by US military officers and Federal officials in Bonn.<sup>143</sup>

Needless to say, the most important controversy in relation to Schwerin's intelligence work and contacts in 1950 is the proposition that he was too close to British intelligence and, hence, this contributed to Adenauer's decision to sack him. While he did enjoy good relations with British intelligence, the available evidence does not sustain the accusation that Schwerin was acting on the instructions of the British, either in his pursuit of rearmament or in his battle against the Gehlen Organisation. Indeed, recently released secret service documents suggest strongly that British intelligence had not only meagre information on Gehlen, but that they were more dismissive of his intelligence abilities than worried about his organisation.<sup>144</sup> The suspicion that Schwerin was a ›British plant‹ does seem to have con-

<sup>140</sup> IfZ, ED 337/26, Wunschzettel eines Aussenstehenden an den neuen Verteidigungsminister, 15.10.1956, and, Die Bestandaufnahme, verbunden mit grossem Wunschzettel eines Aussenstehenden an den neuen Verteidigungs-Minister, 19.10.1956.

<sup>141</sup> Schwerin's daughter suggested that her father's proclivity for affairs with women may have been the reason why he was not recalled to active service. Gabi Pelzer, interview with author, Hamburg, 13.10.2003. According to Geyr von Schweppenburg, Strauß was behind the failure to employ Schwerin. IfZ, ED 91/44, Leo Geyr von Schweppenburg, *Freie Jahre nach dem 2. Weltkrieg*, unpublished typescript, n.d. [1961], p. 53.

<sup>142</sup> Köhler, *Adenauer* (see n. 4), p. 638.

<sup>143</sup> An example is Foerster, ›Innenpolitische Aspekte der Sicherheit Westdeutschlands‹ (see n. 24), p. 458, where the views of Colonel Truman Smith, a close contact of Hans Speidel, are used to justify the assertion that ›High-ranking American officers regarded Schwerin as a second choice.‹

<sup>144</sup> TNA, KV 2/2862, SIS file on Gehlen, 5a, Joan Payne to unnamed official [name sanitized], 11.4.1947, noting: ›According to our records, von GEHLEN was held in detention in the



cerned the US Army Counter Intelligence Corps in mid-1950; but information provided by agents implies the claim was unfounded.<sup>145</sup> Moreover, the fact that by May 1951 he was in the employment of the CIA makes it unlikely that either CIC or the CIA conspired with German intelligence circles to drive him from office, not least of all as Schwerin's CIC file indicates that the Americans were unaware in mid-October 1950 that he was to be dismissed.<sup>146</sup>

What is interesting about the documents which can be found in Schwerin's papers is not only his criticism of the dependency of the Gehlen Organisation on elements of CIC, but also his simultaneous warnings to the CIA of the dangers of an organisation which it had, itself, been funding. How seriously, then, were Schwerin's views taken by the CIA? Given that the official role of the CIA at the time was the coordination of US intelligence and the production of 'national intelligence', defined as being intelligence of an inter-departmental nature, Schwerin obviously enjoyed a highly privileged position for a former German general within the US intelligence apparatus in occupied Germany. When it is recalled that in the first months of 1950 there was still considerable dissatisfaction in Washington over the failure by the CIA to avoid duplication of effort, it can be seen that the agency was still finding its feet as an organisation in mid-1950.<sup>147</sup> But with the arrival of Lucian Truscott in February 1951, the CIA in Germany became a crucial part of the organisation as a whole. Considering that Truscott was the supervisor of all CIA activities in Germany, and responsible for the budget and coordination of its activities with all other American intelligence agencies in Germany, with a staff of 1,400, the full significance of his role becomes clear.<sup>148</sup> Access to Truscott presented Schwerin with remarkable opportunities for influence in intelligence matters, while the trust he was accorded in particular tasks gave him a considerable degree of independence. His role highlights, in fact, the way in which it was difficult at the time to separate the functions of agent, report writer and military adviser from one another.<sup>149</sup>

American Zone of Germany in 1945. We have no interrogation reports. < Apart from that fact that Gehlen is erroneously referred to as 'von' throughout this file, an extract from a separate file, 4a, J.M.A. Gwyer to Marriott, information extracted, 21.4.1948 (original entry, 20.6.1946), commented, 'Gehlen's experience [in the war] was really very limited and one-sided'.

<sup>145</sup> USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 67 f., ECM 57-50, 28.6.1950, para. 13, stating: 'From another usually well informed source, who has not hitherto made a contribution to this case, we hear that in his opinion – which he claims is shared by General SPEIDEL – SCHWERIN is not a British plant, but he took his suggestions to them after he failed to contact U.S. representatives during 1949.'

<sup>146</sup> CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 220, card index, SCHWERIN, Graf. Sub: Security Committee, West German Federal Government, entry of 29.10.1950, which reports on a meeting on 13.10.1950 between Schwerin, two other German representatives and three Allied generals. Despite the date, there is no mention of Schwerin's dismissal.

<sup>147</sup> See, for example, Doc. 420, 'Memorandum from the Secretary of State's Special Assistant for Research and Intelligence (Armstrong) to the Under Secretary of State (Webb), Washington, 2 May 1950. SUBJECT: National Intelligence Estimates', in *FRUS, 1945–1950. Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment* (Washington DC, 1996), pp. 1080–1103.

<sup>148</sup> Heefner, *Dogface Soldier* (see n. 79), pp. 271–5. Furthermore, when McCloy relocated the headquarters of the High Commission to Bonn, Truscott inherited HICOG's Director of Intelligence functions, including the research analysis division, which strengthened his hold on US intelligence activities in Germany.

<sup>149</sup> Schwerin's activities are consistent with the categories of human intelligence and collation and analysis techniques which can be found in modern intelligence theory, but at

Schwerin's intelligence activities have, at the same time, some significance for the history and the style of politics in the Federal Republic in the first half of the 1950s. As the discussions and communications between Schwerin and Schumacher, Erler and Strauß illustrate, political assessments of a subject as crucial as rearmament were significantly influenced by the outlook, practice and methods of intelligence agencies. The intelligence work conducted by Schwerin shows that a good deal of policy-making and informal advising in the early Federal Republic took place within an atmosphere and overall political context in which secret service methods and contacts were of paramount importance. In the ›semi-sovereign state‹ which was the Federal Republic of Germany in the period 1949–56,<sup>150</sup> a world of rumour and informal contacts, which included the importance of maintaining good relations with Allied officials, characterised political activity.

This missing chapter in the biography of Schwerin has, finally, implications for the conclusions drawn in the 2007 report on the events of 13 September 1944 in Aachen which, perhaps inevitably, viewed the events of that day as almost the key to Schwerin's biography. It must be apparent from this analysis, however, that the report writers have not explained convincingly just why the Western Allies were so certain of Schwerin's anti-Nazi credentials – indeed, that they regarded him as almost unique among German generals – since this impression was not based solely on a positive interpretation of his behaviour in Aachen in September 1944.<sup>151</sup> Of course, the extent to which his outlook during the war conformed to an essentially anti-Nazi world view is a question which will have to await the publication of a rigorously researched biography. But given his subsequent failure to secure a post in the new German armed forces, it was probably inevitable that in later life he would seek some form of recognition for his efforts to support democratic renewal. Since he could not discuss in public his collaboration with the British and American intelligence services, the acclaim Schwerin sought as the ›Retter von Aachen‹ may have merely acted as a substitute in his own mind for the recognition he thought he was actually due – that of the man who had continued to warn of the dangers posed by Reinhard Gehlen.

the same time the latitude he enjoyed within the US intelligence structure cannot be so easily reconciled with the emphasis on bureaucratic organisations in the theory. See Michael Herman, *Intelligence Power in Peace and War* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 61–112.

<sup>150</sup> See the treatment in Peter J. Katzenstein, *Policy and Politics in West Germany: The Growth of the Semisovereign State* (Philadelphia, PA, 1987), pp. 3–82, which does though take the idea of the ›semi-sovereign state‹ beyond 1956.

<sup>151</sup> A State Department summary of available intelligence on Schwerin, including post-war interrogation reports, highlighted the fact that he had been one of the few generals whose outlook had been broadened by residence in foreign countries, while his views on Nazism were seen as extremely unusual due to their critical nature. USAISC, CIC file on Schwerin, fol. 61 f., report on Schwerin, Int. Div. HICOG, 1.11.1950. An interrogation report on Schwerin, compiled in late 1945, was described as ›valuable‹ because it was ›based on keen observation and mature experience and with relatively little apologetics.‹ NA, RG 165, Entry 179, Box 738, HQ, US Forces European Theater, OI-FIR/26, The German General Staff Since World War I, 28.12.1945, p. 2.

## Abstract

For many years, the former general Count Gerhard von Schwerin was celebrated in Aachen as a man who sought to save the city from destruction in September 1944. Recently, however, his reputation has come under attack through a report produced by three historians at the University of Aachen. According to the report, his anti-Nazi credentials are also questionable since they are based purely upon Schwerin's own post-war testimony. This article argues that any final verdict on Schwerin must take into account British and American source material relating to his post-war career in intelligence. Not only was Schwerin involved in the foundation of two intelligence organisations while serving as Konrad Adenauer's adviser on rearmament (May–October 1950), he also worked as an agent for the Central Intelligence Agency (1951–3) and advised Kurt Schumacher and Franz Josef Strauß on intelligence questions. A determined critic of Reinhard Gehlen, Schwerin's behind-the-scenes campaign for strong democratic control of the intelligence services, and the trust he was accorded by Allied intelligence officials, suggests that current views on his career require revision.

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Über Jahrzehnte galt General Gerhard Graf von Schwerin als der »Retter von Aachen«, ein Mann, der im September 1944 versucht hatte, die Stadt vor der Zerstörung zu retten. Allerdings ist seine Version der Ereignisse anhand eines Berichts von drei Historikern der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Technischen Hochschule in Aachen infrage gestellt worden. Demnach sei Schwerins mutmaßliche Widerstandshaltung auch deshalb fraglich, weil sie nur auf seinen eigenen Darstellungen aus der Zeit nach 1945 basiert. Dieser Aufsatz argumentiert, dass ein abschließendes Urteil über Schwerin britische und amerikanische Akten einbeziehen muss. Dazu gehören besonders die Quellen, die seine nachrichtendienstlichen Aktivitäten in der Nachkriegszeit betreffen. Schwerin war nicht nur an der Gründung zweier Geheimdienste beteiligt, sondern er arbeitete auch als Agent der CIA (1951–1953) sowie als Nachrichtendienst-Berater für Kurt Schumacher und Franz Josef Strauß. Seine exponierte Kritik an Reinhard Gehlen, seine Kampagne für eine starke parlamentarische Kontrolle der Geheimdienste der Bundesrepublik sowie die Tatsache, dass er das Vertrauen von alliierten Geheimdienstlern genoss, suggeriert, dass das derzeitige Urteil über seine Karriere revidiert werden sollte.

