

'Eurocorps and NATO' from the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (22 May 1992)

Caption: On 22 May 1992, the German newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung stresses the need for the introduction of an effective European defence policy and examines the role of Eurocorps.

Source: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. Zeitung für Deutschland. Hrsg. Fack, Fritz Ullrich; Fest, Joachim; Jeske, Jürgen; Müller-Vogg, Hugo; Reißmüller, Johann Georg. 22.05.1992, Nr. 119. Frankfurt/Main: FAZ Verlag GmbH. "Euro-Korps und Nato", p. 1.

Copyright: (c) Translation CVCE.EU by UNI.LU

All rights of reproduction, of public communication, of adaptation, of distribution or of dissemination via Internet, internal network or any other means are strictly reserved in all countries.

Consult the legal notice and the terms and conditions of use regarding this site.

URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/eurocorps_and_nato_from_the_frankfurter_allgemeine_zeitung_22_may_1992-en-d4a2edod-e1c8-4ee1-b438-5e9b3a93613f.html



Last updated: 05/07/2016

Eurocorps and NATO

Nm. The proposal submitted by François Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl prior to the Maastricht Summit included a footnote stating their intention to form a Franco-German corps. This caused quite a stir at the time, at NATO headquarters in Brussels, in London and in Washington. Although the Allies were subsequently kept informed by the Germans, things still have not quietened down, as is shown by the response to the discussions in La Rochelle, where Germany and France are determining the composition of Eurocorps and its task. The entire issue is a compromise full of grey areas. Germany wants to bring France closer to NATO integration; France is trying, through the corps, to create a European defence identity, one free from US influence. The common ground between them is their wish to ensure that French troops remain in Germany on a new treaty basis.

Experiments like this are prompted by the state in which Europe's security finds itself. The significance of Western European Union (WEU) can no longer be disputed. While the British and the Americans want to develop it into NATO's 'European pillar', some EU countries see it as the foundation for defence in a future European Political Union. Whether it will become either of these things depends on how NATO and America's involvement with Europe develops. Of the 300 000 American soldiers in Europe at the moment, the Bush Administration would like to withdraw half over the next few years. The US Congress is already talking of reducing the number to 75 000 or 50 000 troops. The United States wants the remaining troops primarily to maintain its European bridgehead to strategically important areas, i.e. to the Middle East and the Gulf region. Europe has other priorities, not least in the light of the recent war in the Balkans.

To date, no European defence capability has existed at all, with or without a Franco-German corps; the only operational security structure is NATO. However, since America is keeping its distance from the conflicts in post-Communist Europe, the Alliance is paralysed when it comes to military action. The way that security and defence in Europe will be organised in future will be determined by who takes control in a crisis and shows themselves capable of taking action in the event of a conflict.