

Memorandum from the Luxembourg Embassy in Bonn to the Luxembourg Minister for Foreign Affairs (Bonn, 7 September 1960)

Caption: On 7 September 1960, a note from the Luxembourg Embassy in Bonn to the Luxembourg Minister for Foreign Affairs sets out Germany's reactions to the press conference held by the French President, Charles de Gaulle.

Source: Archives Nationales du Luxembourg, Luxembourg, Ministère des Affaires étrangères. Coopération politique européenne-Questions fondamentales. Antécédents-Conversations bilatérales, AE 13074.

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The Luxembourg Ambassador to Bonn
to
the Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Luxembourg

Re: Reactions to President de Gaulle's press conference

Government circles in Germany have refrained from any criticism of General de Gaulle's remarks. They simply say that achievements to date over the Common Market are, from the German point of view, the intangible basis from which all future developments must proceed. They also welcome the firm line that President de Gaulle has taken on Moscow. Moreover, they regard his suggestion about political talks by heads of government as useful.

The opposition parties have reacted differently. A spokesman for the Socialist Party accuses President de Gaulle of undermining the foundations of NATO by his categorical opposition to all military integration.

Mr Mende, party spokesman for the FDP (Liberals), is calling on the Federal Government to reject President de Gaulle's proposals. According to the FDP, French hostility to integration and the demand for a special status for France are not reconcilable with the interests of the other NATO partners. The main imperative is to strengthen ties between the USA and the free nations of Europe.

I am attaching a few articles from the German press so as to give you an idea of public reactions to the ideas set out by President de Gaulle. Typical headlines include 'Many made uneasy by de Gaulle', 'No plaudits for de Gaulle' or 'Bonn not happy with de Gaulle'.

It is France's plans for the reform of European and transatlantic relations which produce the most comment. Whilst most pro-government newspapers express both praise and criticism, other commentators are harsher, expressing surprise at the endorsement by German government circles of plans which 'go against everything that, until very recently, was sacred to Chancellor Adenauer and his colleagues' (*Generalanzeiger*).