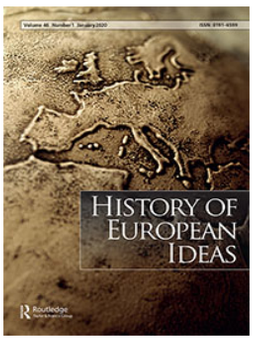

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Nationalism, transnationalism and European socialism in the 1950s: a comparison of the French and German cases

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ABSTRACT

This article explores national dimensions of transnational interaction between the French Socialist Party (SFIO) and the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) in the 1940s–1950s within a comparative framework. Doing so allows us to uncover why the French and German parties retained intensive transnational contacts with one another despite their disappointments with postwar socialist internationalism. The SFIO and SPD were eager to put a socialist stamp on reconstruction, European integration, and French-German relations. The article shows why transnational engagement with their cross-Rhine colleagues appeared the most promising path to do so. Despite lengthy conflicts on Cold War politics, the international politics of reconstruction, and, later, decolonization and the Algerian and Suez Wars, the SFIO and SPD successfully compartmentalized their differences by establishing an autonomous track for transnational relations in European parliamentary assemblies. French-German cooperation on matters of European integration yielded the period's greatest transnational successes, including the establishment of the Congress of Socialist Parties of the European Communities. In the early 1960s, the two-track nature of French-German inter-socialist relations endured but structural factors eroded the balance of power between French and Germans needed to sustain the mutual satisfaction with transnational cooperation that had peaked in the mid-1950s.

KEYWORDS

Nationalism; transnationalism; socialist internationalism; French socialism; German social democracy; European integration

1. Introduction

An old cliché hovers over the study of postwar transnational socialism in Europe. The 'nationalization' of socialist parties thesis, first formulated by Italian Socialist Ignazio Silone in 1947, has proven remarkably durable, having been taken up rather uncritically by several generations of political scientists and historians to emphasize the 'nationalism' of postwar social democracy.[1] The phrase was employed with particular aplomb by French socialist André Philip, who denounced socialists' incessant squabbling over issues of European integration in transnational spheres in 1950, before redeploying it again in 1956 against his own party leadership in the contexts of the Algerian and Suez

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[1]Wilfried Loth, *Sozialismus und Internationalismus: die französicher Sozialisten und die Nachkriegsordnung Europas 1940–1950* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1977); Dietrich Orlow, 'Delayed Reaction: Democracy, Nationalism, and the SPD, 1945–1966', *German Studies Review* 16, no. 1 (1993): 77–102; William E. Paterson, 'The German Social Democratic Party and European Integration in Emigration and Occupation', *European History Quarterly* 5, no. 4 (1975): 429–41; Donald Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism: The West European Left in the Twentieth Century* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2014), 132; V. Stanley Vardys, 'Germany's Postwar Socialism: Nationalism and Kurt Schumacher (1945–1952)', *The Review of Politics* 27, no. 2 (1965): 220–44.

wars.[2] Even targets of the pejorative like German Social-Democratic leader Kurt Schumacher and French Socialist leader Guy Mollet used the refrain to express disappointment with postwar socialist internationalism. Schumacher, for instance, told the SPD executive committee in 1947 that, 'The parties of the Second International are still prisoners of their national ideologies'.[3] Mollet, after a meeting with Schumacher, reported in 1950 that, 'all together he employed German arguments rather than socialist arguments'.[4] On socialist internationalism more broadly, Mollet 'consider[ed] inconceivable the positions taken by certain foreign delegates who have too strong a tendency to employ more nationalism than socialism'.

Historiography on international socialism in Europe during the late 1940s–1950s has evolved from an emphasis on the nationalism of socialist parties to a new emerging consensus that transnational socialist interactions were more successful than previously recognized. Inaugurating this turn, Talbot Imlay emphasizes that 'describ[ing] the postwar SPD as nationalist … overlooks the party's strong commitment to internationalism'.[5] His book on transnational cooperation between the French Socialist (SFIO), German Social Democratic (SPD) and UK Labour parties argues 'that the practice of socialist internationalism reached its twentieth-century high points in the years after the First and Second World Wars' but 'towards the end of the 1950s socialist internationalism underwent a process of nationalization as each party began to define its position on international issues increasingly on its own, independently of other parties'.[6] Ettore Costa investigates the Labour Party as a central node around which postwar socialist internationalism developed in the 1940s-early 1950s. He encourages scholars to incorporate conflict and rejection as much as cooperation into the study of international party relations, in particular by examining the performance of internal party conflicts on the international stage.[7] Matt Broad examines relations between the UK Labour and Danish Social Democratic Party as 'a sort of informal diplomatic channel' in the late 1950s–1960s, arguing that the Danish party 'was a notable source of pressure and influence on Labour … [and] held what at times was fairly impressive sway over British European policy'.[8] Finally, I have demonstrated how prolonged transnational contact between the French and German socialist parties after 1918 led to policy convergence in support of trade liberalization and regional customs unions, policies that came to fruition in their support for a European common market in 1955–1957.[9]

This new research supports Glenda Sluga's and Patricia Clavin's view in *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History* that 'internationalisms were central to the major political questions and themes of the twentieth century'.[10] Though Alan Milward famously argued that European integration in the 1950s was primarily a *European Rescue of the Nation State*, in recent years scholars are increasingly appreciating again the importance that internationalism played in the origins of the European communities. Rather than earlier histories' focus on federalist movements and 'European saints', to which Milward directed his criticism, this scholarship emphasizes the impact of transnational cooperation among political parties on European integration.[11] Here Wolfram Kaiser's study of the transnational rise and fall of postwar Christian-Democratic networks remains most

[2]Groupe Parlementaire Socialiste, 13 December 1950, Archive d'histoire contemporaine, Sciences-po; André Philip, *Le Socialisme trahi* (Paris: Plon, 1957).
[3]Parteivorstand, 10 January 1947, Archiv der Sozialen Demokratie (AdsD).
[4]RESUME DE LA CONVERSATION ENTRE SCHUMARER [sic] ET GUY MOLLET, AGM-58, Office Universitaire de Recherche Socialiste (OURS).
[5]Talbot Imlay, '"The Policy of Social Democracy is self-consciously internationalist": The German Social Democratic Party's Internationalism after 1945', *The Journal of Modern History* 86, no. 1 (2014): 81–123, here 83.
[6]Talbot Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism: European Socialists and International Politics, 1918–1960* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 3–8.
[7]Ettore Costa, *The Labour Party, Denis Healey and the International Socialist Movement* (Cham: Palgrave Studies in the History of Social Movements, 2018), 4–10.
[8]Matthew Broad, *Harold Wilson, Denmark and Labour European Policy, 1958–72* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017), 4, 19–20.
[9]Brian Shaev, 'Liberalising Regional Trade: Socialists and European Economic Integration', *Contemporary European History* 27, no. 2 (2018): 258–79.
[10]Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin, *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 6.
[11]Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (London: Routledge, 2000).

prominent.[12] This article contributes to this ongoing research agenda by exploring the national-level motivations that inspired socialist parties to engage in transnational cooperation after the Second World War. Rather than focusing primarily on transnational meetings and debates, the source base privileges the records of private meetings of national party leaders (national executive committee and parliamentary group meetings) as well as correspondence between socialists engaged in transnational socialist discussions and their national party secretariats. This focus allows us to uncover why the French and German parties retained intensive transnational contacts with one another through the 1950s despite disappointments with the general trajectory of postwar internationalism and the at-time severe disagreements that arose between the parties.

Hence, methodologically, this article explores national dimensions of transnational interaction between two socialist parties in the 1950s within a comparative framework. Analyzing bilateral relations between these parties offers a particularly advantageous window to understand their broader motivations for transnational engagement in the 1950s because so much of international politics within the Western bloc revolved around the 'German question' and French-German reconciliation. The SFIO and SPD were eager to put a socialist stamp on reconstruction, European integration, and French-German relations. The article shows why transnational engagement with their cross-Rhine colleagues appeared the most promising path to do so, while also serving as domestic legitimizing agents for new generations of party leaders. Wrenching economic and social problems of reconstruction, and the deep and numerous conflicts between their governments, meant that the parties were bound to come into conflict when discussions touched on core national interests that, also for electoral purposes, could not easily be abandoned. That postwar socialist internationalism failed because of a nationalization of socialist parties, a truism that opened this introduction, rests on a false premise as regards the French and German parties. Both were committed to socialist internationalism but their commitment intersected with other party goals of equal or greater salience, like tackling postwar coal shortages that lead to rolling blackouts and frigid winters in the late 1940s, the emotionally-charged issue of German rearmament just a few years after the war, and the push and pull of key constituencies and interest groups that affect all large political organizations. What was unique of course was that the socialists placed such prime discursive and symbolic importance on displaying their internationalism during these years but, like all parties operating in democracies, they had to tussle for national votes with other political forces. Contemporary opinion we may understand, as polemics can be useful tools in national and international politics alike, but why would scholars expect political parties to privilege socialist internationalism over domestic political goals when push came to shove on matters of critical importance?

From this perspective, it is especially revealing that the parties continued to cooperate even when domestic political incentives suggest that it would have been in their interest to stop. It is worthwhile considering why they did so, for such a long period of time. Here we ask: What did socialists hope to achieve through bilateral engagement and in the Socialist International (SI) and European parliamentary bodies in the 1950s? What frustrations emerged and how did perceptions of national interests and transnational cooperation evolve in the 1950s? What did participants in transnational meetings report back to their national parties? In other words, what did the major national party organs think about their heavy engagement in transnational politics? Answering such questions brings to the fore just how committed leading socialists were at home to transnational socialist engagement abroad, driven as they were by a deep tradition of socialist internationalism reaching back to the nineteenth century, the low-hanging fruit of information gathering and practical assistance, opportunities for a detoxification of inter-party disputes through private transnational exchanges, and the idealism, chimeric as it sometimes was, that international socialism had the best vision of justice, peace and prosperity upon which to build a future in common.

The paper is divided into three sections. First, it explores the incentives that encouraged French and German socialists to re-engage with one another and their persistence in doing so despite the

[12]Wolfram Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

severe difficulties these relations experienced in the contexts of European reconstruction and the Cold War in 1948–1951. Second, it analyzes a successful compartmentalization of inter-party disputes during the rocky life of the European Defense Community (EDC) proposal in 1950–1954 and the subsequent incorporation of SPD officials into Jean Monnet's Action Committee for the United States of Europe through Mollet's transnational socialist networking. The parties went at each other in SI meetings and at the Council of Europe (CoE) yet managed to build an impressive working relationship within the transnational Socialist Group of the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Cooperation there provided space and expertise for a pro-European community group of German Social Democrats to emerge in time to influence internal SPD debates over a European common market in 1956–1957.

Finally, it analyzes the heavy toll that Mollet's tenure in government had on relations between the parties and the restraint that the SPD leadership nonetheless displayed despite an accumulation of incentives to break with the French party. Public disputes in the SI over decolonization and the Algerian War, the Suez War, and collective security and Cold War disengagement gnawed at socialists' otherwise continued attachment to socialist internationalism. Yet transnational cooperation continued in the guise of a common socialist program for Europe in 1962 and bilateral coordination against the Gaullist veto of the UK application for EEC membership and efforts to undermine supranationalism in the European communities in 1963. However, the structural decline of French socialism from 1958 and the increasing international self-confidence and domestic success of German social democracy in the 1960s made SFIO leaders increasingly conscious of their inability to participate as an equal with the German party in transnational spheres. The SFIO's prolonged weakness in the new decade does more to explain the decline of transnational relations with the SPD than any 'nationalization' thesis, as German social-democratic leaders had less to gain from transnational interaction with French Socialists than they had had in the previous decade when the SFIO had been at the center of French international policy.

2. Restoring international socialism and the transnational politics of European reconstruction

Direct interaction between the parties was reconstructed after the war through key interlocutors who had the language skills, international connections, and eagerness to carry out such tasks for the parties' international bureaus. Most important was Günther Markscheffel, entrusted by the Hannover office of party leader Kurt Schumacher as the SPD's *Vertrauensmann* in Paris.[13] This was a vital task for the young postwar SPD, whose leaders yearned for domestic and international legitimacy, the trust of their international colleagues, and the loyalty of other social-democratic parties after 12 years underground and in exile during the Third Reich and Second World War. In December 1945, Markscheffel informed Schumacher that he was lobbying for the SFIO to send a delegation to visit the new SPD leaders in Germany.[14] A month later, Schumacher wrote Markscheffel, emphasizing how much the party valued his work and promising to finance his activities in Paris. Putting the party's stamp on Markscheffel's lobbying, Schumacher wrote SFIO party leader Daniel Mayer to request that a SFIO delegation come to Germany.[15] Though there is no record of Mayer replying to Schumacher's letter, it is clear that both parties were pleased with the back-channel contacts. In May 1946, the SPD approved a SFIO request that Markscheffel remain in Paris to maintain an open line to Hannover, delaying his return to Germany where he was to take a zonal party secretary position in Baden-Württemburg.[16]

[13]Parteivorstand, 12 July 1946, AdsD.
[14]Markscheffel to Schumacher, 28 December 1945, Günter Markscheffel (GM)-67, AdsD.
[15]Schumacher to Mayer, 6 January 1946, GM-5, AdsD.
[16]Ollenhauer to Markscheffel, 16 July 1946, GM-67, AdsD.

These first contacts tended towards practical issues, which developed into more intense forms of information exchange and symbolic politics. The SPD used its line to the SFIO to free SPD prisoners of war,[17] counter 'separatism' in the French occupation zone and otherwise lobby against French occupation policies. In the realm of symbolic politics, Markscheffel quietly campaigned for the SPD to receive an invitation to SFIO national congresses,[18] which the SFIO granted in 1949.[19] The two parties collaborated to restore and reopen Karl Marx's birthplace home in Trier.[20] This nod to the early socialist luminary, a driving force behind the First International, was symptomatic of a desire to (re)construct a common socialist history between France and Germany. In part reflecting the success of back-channel links, the SFIO came out strongly in favor of the SPD's reintegration into the postwar international socialist community, at first known as COMISCO, despite the anti-German nature of post-war French politics. A key figure here was the colorful and witty Salomon Grumbach, head of the SFIO's international bureau who voted for Mollet to become party leader at the 1946 SFIO congress despite his personal preference for Mayer. An Alsatian Jew close to former party leader Léon Blum, he had grown up when Alsace was part of Germany and joined the SPD before the First World War. When, apparently upon Markscheffel's request,[21] the SFIO established a German Affairs Committee as part of its international bureau, Grumbach paired this work with a chairmanship of the German and Austrian occupation affairs committee in the French National Assembly. Grumbach was in regular contact with Markscheffel, placing him at the center of cross-party interaction in the 1940s. When COMISCO debated the SPD's admission in 1947, Grumbach was the SPD's most avid and compelling advocate. To a skeptical international socialist audience, Grumbach recalled the first contacts he had with German Social Democrats in international meetings after the First World War. Showering legitimizing rhetoric upon Schumacher, Grumbach claimed to have met him in Germany for an anti-Nazi rally in the early 1930s (Schumacher had been a leader of the anti-Nazi Iron Front). In the last years, when visiting Germany, 'I am filled with worry, I ask myself: whom to address? With whom should I enter into contact?' The answer, evidently, was with the SPD, and 'I had several conservations with Schumacher'.[22] Grumbach's motivation was previewed to a SFIO executive meeting the month before, in which Grumbach said that, 'We need to establish a permanent contact with the SPD if we want Germany to democratize'.[23] The SPD was readmitted to COMISCO that year.

For the isolated SPD, commitment to socialist internationalism and the prestige and legitimacy of belonging to an international community intersected with practical concerns, prosaic information gathering, and early goals related to European reconstruction. For the SFIO, cross-border relations with the SPD helped strengthen the new party leadership's position before party militants by mobilizing a traditional rhetoric of Jaurressian internationalism, which included promoting the party's postwar vision of European (con)federation.[24] Together with anti-communism, these motivated French and German socialists to promote the recreation of the SI against Labour reticence in the 1940s, finally achieved in 1951. It also drove them to seek closer ties with one another. Transnational contact, however, came with risks. At the individual level, the day-to-day work of transnationalism fell on so few shoulders that problems arose that tended to take three forms. First, interlocutors could 'go native' and counter-lobby for the other party's positions. This was the case with Alfred Cohen-Reuss, German resident in France who had initially hoped to fill Markscheffel's shoes. Fritz Heine,

[17]Parteivorstand, 4 June 1946, AdsD.
[18]Cohen-Reuss to Heine, 17 July 1947, 2/PVAJ0000011, AdsD.
[19]'Tagung des SPD-Vorstandes in Hannover', Sopade Nr. 815, 6 July 1949.
[20]Parteivorstand, 19 November 1946, AdsD.
[21]Schumacher Bureau to Markscheffel, 30 January 1946, GM-7, AdsD.
[22]Conférence Socialiste International Zürich 6/9 juin 1947, Socialist International (SI)-235, International Institute for Social History (IISH).
[23]Comité directeur (CD), 28 May 1947, OURS.
[24]Loth, *Sozialismus und Internationalismus*; Brian Shaev, 'Estrangement and Reconciliation: French Socialists, German Social Democrats and the Origins of European Integration, 1948–1957' (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2014).

head of the SPD's international bureau, was wary of Cohen-Reuss.[25] The SPD leadership's doubts appeared confirmed in 1949 when Cohen-Reuss took the SFIO's side in the principle international issue facing French-German relations, i.e. policy towards the Ruhr industrial valley.[26] Second, it was particularly damaging for transnational relations when an interlocuter offended the other party in one way or another. For instance, an SPD newspaper *Die Freiheit*, edited by Markscheffel, published an article that accused the French zonal authorities of granting lower food rations (during the 'hungry winter' when food rations were pitiful in France as well) than some German wartime concentration camps. When French authorities banned *Die Freiheit*, Markscheffel and the SPD appealed to the SFIO in the name of press freedom.[27] SFIO leaders successfully pressured to lift the ban but the article infuriated them.[28] Finally, uncertainties arose when party leaderships came to doubt the influence of their contact with the other party or whether the contact was in a position to accurately recount the other party's positions. This was so for Louis Levy, SFIO representative in London with the Labour Party,[29] and over time with Grumbach, as the SPD noticed his loss of influence over SFIO international policy in the late 1940s,[30] before he entered internal party opposition against Mollet in 1951–1952 due to his opposition to the EDC.

The greatest risk in transnational cooperation was when the positions or reputations of prominent figures in the other party became embarrassing within domestic politics at home. Intractable disagreements on first-order political issues could also turn transnational events into semi-public battles between the parties. Both featured in the deep inter-party clash of 1948–1951 over Allied policies towards European reconstruction and Germany's Ruhr industrial valley. These were fraught years for socialist internationalism, in which accusations of nationalism ricocheted across borders, the SPD had to defend Carlo Schmid, a prominent leader, from accusations of having ordered the executions of resistance fighters during the wartime occupation of France,[31] and Mollet became so disillusioned with the Labour Party in 1950 that he expressed his preference in internal discussions that the SFIO abandon COMISCO altogether.[32] The French-German spat was but one among a number of fault-lines in transnational socialism. Particularly ugly was international interference in the domestic and internal party politics of neighboring states. Marc Drögemöller demonstrates how Alfred Mozer, originally a German SPD member and postwar head of the Dutch Labour Party's (PvdA) international bureau, campaigned without scruples against SPD foreign policy and called on local SPD sections to break with Schumacher.[33] The SPD protested by not inviting PvdA speakers to its congresses and refusing to attend PvdA congresses in the early 1950s.[34] Philip (and to a lesser extent Grumbach) undertook a similar but less strident tour of Germany to promote the Schuman Plan against the SPD's opposition, though this was less offensive as Philip had a more tenuous position within the SFIO leadership and had a reputation anyway as a loner.

Transnational socialist meetings from 1948 were dominated by an extended conflict over what to do with the Ruhr. The SFIO-SPD dispute over Western policy from the International Authority for the Ruhr to the Schuman Plan was rooted in the domestic politics of reconstruction, as I have analyzed.[35] Dortmund mayor Fritz Henssler, a central figure in the SPD executive committee, called for lobbying the Labour Party on the issue before a May 1948 COMISCO meeting in Vienna but Erich

[25]Cohen-Reuss to Heine, 7 April 1949, 2/PVAJ0000011, AdsD.
[26]Cohen-Reuss to Schumacher, 16 November 1949, Ibid.
[27]Heine circular, 28 May 1948, GM-5, AdsD.
[28]Rosenfeld to Markscheffel, 6 August 1948, Ibid.
[29]See Braunthal's letter to Pontillon upon Louis Levy's death in 1952, 13 March 1952, SI-605, IISH.
[30]Eichler to Heine, 6 August 1948, Willi Eichler (WE)-110, AdsD.
[31]An early reference to this emerging controversy is Hubert to Brutelle, 12 April 1949, AGM-58, OURS.
[32]CD, 5 April 1950, OURS.
[33]Marc Drögemöller, *Zwei Schwestern in Europa: Deutsche und niederländische Sozialdemokratie 1945–1990* (Berlin: Vorwärts, 2008), 105–7.
[34]Parteivorstand, 30–31 January 1953, AdsD.
[35]Brian Shaev, 'Workers' Politics, the Communist Challenge, and the Schuman Plan: A Comparative History of the French Socialist and German Social Democratic Parties and the First Treaty for European Integration', *International Review of Social History* 61, no. 2 (2016): 251–81.

Ollenhauer, SPD vice party secretary, said that, 'We should try to come to an agreement with the French before the meeting'.[36] Markscheffel had already contacted Blum, Grumbach, prominent internationalist Gérard Jaquet, and Mollet. His transnational engagement meant that the SPD was well informed of the SFIO position in advance (he sent back a detailed account of SFIO intentions for the meeting, which was subsequently marked up by hand by Schumacher).[37] These exchanges facilitated a tenuous compromise in Vienna in which French Socialists supported 'nationalization' of Ruhr industry while SPD delegates agreed to 'internationalization' if other European industrial regions were simultaneously internationalized. It was an honorable compromise, but the international London Accords in June and the French government's subsequent demand for an International Authority for the Ruhr (and only the Ruhr) quickly spoiled it. Transnational relations deteriorated in summer 1948. Despite efforts by the internationally-oriented Willi Eichler to seek a common resolution with the SFIO, Heine replied that, 'We are of the opinion that a common French/German declaration on the Ruhr cannot come about at the current moment that would be useful for them or for us'.[38] Instead SPD leaders denounced SFIO leaders for abandoning the Vienna compromise in its support for the IAR, which would, in the SPD's view, preclude nationalization and turn the territory into a colony of French interests.[39] SFIO leaders later fumed privately that the concession they had made in transnational politics had been re-deployed against them after international circumstances had changed.[40]

When the Schuman Plan for a supranational coal and steel community erupted onto the scene of international politics in May 1950, there followed a nasty clash between the Labour Party, which took the opportunity not only to oppose the plan but to denounce all supranationalism, and the SFIO, which had been campaigning for supranational (con)federation. Frustrations bubbling since 1945 burst in May-June 1950. The anglophile Mollet was disgusted at Labour's lack of reciprocity and called for boycotting the upcoming international meeting in London because 'If we go to London, we will give public opinion the impression that we are playing second fiddle to Labour'. (The SPD had similar worries of Labour hegemony in the late 1940s and were concerned about being viewed as an 'agent' of the Labour government within Germany.)[41] Two remarks at the SFIO meeting are particularly pertinent; first, Grumbach argued that the SFIO should go to London because 'The German comrades need our presence', and second Oreste Rosenfeld remarked that, 'The attitude of Labour might change after the [upcoming] election. We must protect the future [*Il faut réserver l'avenir*]'.[42] These statements help elucidate why transnational relations continued even when the SFIO and SPD leaderships considered their association with other socialist parties to be politically damaging in 1950–1951.

In a similar vein, Grumbach told an SPD colleague in a June 1951 transnational meeting on the Schuman Plan that, 'what he really regretted was not so much the difference of opinion but the poisoning of the atmosphere in the public discussion'.[43] A de-toxification strategy allowed transnational contacts to survive these deep clashes on European politics. Confidential meetings were held during each major clash, in December 1949 following the Petersburg incident, in which Schumacher aggressively denounced the new German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's agreement to join the IAR, in June 1951 on the Schuman Plan, in May 1952 on the EDC, and in March 1953 on the European Political Community proposal, all opposed by SPD leaders. Transnational meetings provided confidential space for socialists to explain themselves, seek sympathy for their parties' position and, when

[36]Parteivorstand, 6 May 1948, AdsD.
[37]Markscheffel to Parteivorstand, 9 April 1948, Erich Ollenhauer (EO)-443, AdsD.
[38]Eichler to Heine, 6 August 1948; Heine to Eichler, 12 August 1948, WE-110, AdsD.
[39]Parteivorstand, 29–30 June 1948, AdsD.
[40]CD, 26 April 1950, OURS.
[41]Eichler, 13–14 March 1947, Parteivorstand, AdsD.
[42]CD, 13 June 1950, OURS.
[43]Minutes of the Conference on the Schuman Plan, Frankfurt a/M., 27–28 June 1951, SI-241, IISH.

possible, to lobby, pressure and convince their international colleagues. Socialists considered the meetings useful even when there was little room for transnational agreement in the short term.

SPD leaders were eager to use transnational meetings to reduce their domestic and international isolation, address misunderstandings, and mitigate the negative international impact of their domestic political strategies. A confidential SPD internal note (undated but circa 1949–1950) states that the 'understanding of the foreign policy conceptions of the SPD was clearly low' among visiting Dutch parliamentarians, and Philip and Grumbach are mentioned for the SFIO as well, with the note highlighting the seriousness of this problem.[44] Ollenhauer told the SPD central committee about a December 1949 meeting on the side of COMISCO. SPD delegates, he reported, used the occasion 'to again emphasize SPD willingness to collaborate on international security controls in Germany and on the effective new-shaping of the general European situation'.[45] Transnational meetings were also an opportunity to glean valuable information on internal divisions in other parties, such as when Ollenhauer reported back that, 'The 5 French represented 5 different factions of the SFIO' at a transnational meeting on the EDC in 1952.[46] Such information proved useful to the development of the SPD's own anti-EDC policy.[47]

Meanwhile, SFIO leaders, at times perplexed and angry, used transnational opportunities to determine just how concerned they should be about SPD positions on international affairs. They were not alone in this, as the Labour Party's Morgan Phillips wanted to know at a November 1949 meeting what an SPD government would mean for the Petersburg accord. Would it rescind it and reawaken a sense of insecurity in France? The German author of the internal memo of the exchange commented that Schumacher did not give a clear answer.[48] In 1951, Jaquet asked what the SPD attitude would be if the Soviets proposed German neutralization, to which Ollenhauer assured him the SPD was opposed,[49] but the SPD position appeared to shift with the March 1952 Stalin note offering negotiations for German reunification. Concerns about what a SPD government might do gained potency in 1952–1954, when SFIO leaders wanted to know whether it would renege on international agreements or, most troubling for the pro-EDC SFIO majority, negotiate away Western security for German reunification.[50] Mollet had difficulty piercing the nebulous cloud that surrounded SPD intentions, experiences that contributed to Mollet's alleged preference for Adenauer to win the 1957 German federal election. Hence this is an instance of the intensity of exchanges increasing alienation and distance between the parties in the 1950s, an aspect highlighted by Costa and Imlay. Transnational exchange on the Schuman Plan in 1951, by contrast, was 'very useful' Mollet told his French colleagues because 'all together, we found enough comprehension [for our position]' and, 'if Schumacher tomorrow wins a majority, he would conduct a policy that is very close to ours'. Satisfied that 'it clearly appears that the problem for them is essentially a matter of domestic policy, [that] it was necessary to beat the Christian Democrats', Mollet concluded that 'I consider it necessary to have very frequent contact with our friends the SPD'.[51]

This section has shown how transnational contact could be perilous for socialist parties in the initial postwar period. Yet there was no formal rupture even during the darkest moments. Despite bruised egos, hurt reputations, and mutual recriminations, continuities in transnational relations prepared the grounds for a particularly successful period of cooperation on matters of European integration in the mid-1950s. Interlocutors like Grumbach and Markscheffel fostered a recognition of the challenges of the domestic political contexts in which the other party existed. For instance, a lengthy 1946 document by Markscheffel for the SPD leadership demonstrates extensive knowledge

[44]Vertraulicher 7/II, GM-26, AdsD.
[45]Parteivorstand, 6–7 January 1950, AdsD.
[46]Parteivorstand, 5 May 1952, AdsD.
[47]Shaev, 'Estrangement and Reconciliation', 139–200.
[48]Vertraulich, 30 November 1949, GM-26, AdsD.
[49]Séance du 6 décembre 1951 (9 h), Confederation of the Socialist Parties of the European Community (CSPEC)-39, IISH.
[50]Putzrath to Ollenhauer, 17 July 1952, 5 May 5 1952; Dreierbesprechungen in Bonn vom 27. April 1952 Labour Party-SPD-SFIO, streng vertraulicher Bericht, EO-391, AdsD.
[51]CD, 27 June 1951, OURS.

of French postwar politics and promoted an understanding of the SFIO's position without taking its side in the manner in which Cohen-Reuss's later communications were received by SPD leaders. Discussing SFIO German policy, Markscheffel wrote that, 'we must also not forget that the party has to take into account its voters and these voters have little time or understanding for an "international attitude"'.[52]

3. Socialist compartmentalization: the two-track nature of French-German transnationalism in the 1950s

Frenetic transnational discussions and positioning in 1948–1951 established a two-track quality to French-German inter-socialist relations that proved quite useful to both parties through the 1950s. In one track, generally involving top party leaders, socialists continued to clash in transnational meetings on high-order geopolitical issues of the early Cold War, e.g. collective security, disarmament, four-power negotiations with the Soviet Union, and German reunification. To this sphere were added in the late 1950s an increasingly raucous international politics of decolonization, French colonial wars, and relations with the non-aligned movement and newly independent 'Third World' countries. In another track, socialists collaborated in an increasingly intense exchange that produced relatively cohesive positions within the Socialist Group of the early European parliament (the Common Assembly in 1952–1958 and the Parliamentary Assembly from 1958). Socialists in both parties were instrumental in creating this two-track approach in 1950–1952 and increasingly appreciative of its successes by 1953–1954. This second track was set into gear by party leaders, with Mollet initially taking the Socialist Group's presidency and Ollenhauer the vice presidency, but they increasingly delegated its work to other European parliamentarians and party economic experts. These, in turn, brought party leaders back in to debate their compromise formulae and to conduct grand strategizing at transnational party conferences of European community countries which served as bridges from the Socialist Group to the wider stages of the CoE and SI.

This section demonstrates how this compartmentalization yielded the period's greatest transnational successes: (1) the adhesion of the SPD to Jean Monnet's Action Committee for the United States of Europe, (2) the launch of the Congress of Socialist Parties of the European Communities; and (3) the elevation of pro-ECSC voices within the SPD who pushed the party to support the Treaties of Rome to create the EEC and a European atomic energy community after the party had opposed the ECSC and EDC treaties. That this second track opened was an act of will. At a May 1949 COMISCO meeting, before the first summer session of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, the French representative Jacques Piette presented guidelines to intensify transnational party coordination on issues of European cooperation. 'At the Strasbourg Assembly', he said, 'the national delegations should not act as ministerial delegates for their countries', but rather, 'Delegates should have freedom of action and they should behave as European rather than as national delegates'. This meant that:

1. there should be agreement among Socialists on action to be taken in Strasbourg.
2. the representatives at Strasbourg should be independent of their governments and
3. economic questions should be given priority.[53]

The third point suggests that the SFIO was already aware that the likeliest area of success for transnational socialism was in the field of economic policy, which gained greater impetus in a series of SI experts meetings in the early 1950s. For the SPD, the situation was complicated because Germany, at first absent from the Council of Europe, was invited to join only by agreeing to the Petersburg agreement, which tied together Allied industrial policy toward the Ruhr with Germany's participation in early European fora of cooperation. For this reason, Schumacher's SPD rejected

[52]Markscheffel, Frankreich und die deutschen Grenzen im Westen, 22 April 1946, GM-67, AdsD.
[53]International Socialist Conference, Summarised Report of Proceedings, Baarn, Holland 14–16 May 1949, SI-237, IISH.

Germany's accession to the Council of Europe, causing an internal row on social-democratic policy towards Europe. Nonetheless, in a clear precedent for its approach to the ECSC, once the Bundestag approved Germany's membership, Schumacher sanctioned the participation of SPD delegates in the Consultative Assembly. Already in January, Ollenhauer had remarked that COMISCO's work was de facto being transferred into the Socialist Inter-Group that had been constructed on the insistence of the Belgian, Dutch, and French parties.[54] At the Consultative Assembly in summer 1950, and in later meetings in November, the socialist inter-group (including now the SPD) appeared almost hopelessly divided in a broad philosophical debate over European integration that pitted the SFIO and Belgian Socialist Party against the Labour Party, Atlanticists against opponents of German rearmament, and Mollet against Philip. Still, Ollenhauer reported back to the SPD central committee that 'these [socialist] meetings before the Congress were a useful form of discussion among socialists'.[55]

The ECSC Common Assembly, which opened in September 1952, proved a far more propitious setting for transnational socialist cooperation than the Inter-Group of the Council of Europe because hard-core opponents of supranationalism were absent (the SPD was in principle a pro-supranational party) and discussions focused on economic cooperation, unlike the Council of Europe, which witnessed stormy debates about German rearmament and Cold War politics. The SPD brought a constructive attitude into the assembly, which Mollet and others certainly noticed. Ollenhauer signaled his party's eagerness to cooperate when he was immediately faced with a 'dilemma': whether to vote for the German Christian-Democratic candidate Heinrich von Brentano or the Belgian Socialist Paul-Henri Spaak for the presidency of the ECSC assembly. Spaak told the Socialist Group that he would only present his candidacy with SPD support, placing the SPD in 'an excessively delicate and difficult' position because the CDU would pummel it for breaking 'German solidarity'.[56] With SPD votes, Spaak was duly elected president, allowing SPD leaders to gush in a rare moment of praise from their international colleagues. Mollet said in an interview that, 'This decision of German Social Democrats to support the socialist candidate rather than the German candidate also opens an encouraging perspective for the collaboration of fraternal parties in the Common Assembly'.[57] The vote heightened awareness of the heavy German social-democratic presence within the Socialist Group, as Mollet lamented that their absence from an ad hoc assembly to debate a European Political Community meant that the position of socialist parties was 'catastrophic' there because, in the SPD's absence, Christian democrats were close to an absolute majority.

Parliamentary arithmetic was therefore important in motivating transnational cooperation but so too was the broader support for turning the Common Assembly over time into a real functioning parliament, which drove not only SPD members to support the creation of a strong Socialist Group but also to demand greater powers for the assembly, despite initially maintaining their opposition to the community. Herbert Wehner, an SPD heavyweight and ECSC assembly member, pushed the Group to support the creation of more parliamentary committees during the ECSC's inaugural sessions than were supported by the otherwise pro-integration Christian democrats.[58] Wehner wrote in the SPD press shortly thereafter that the SPD was successful in this endeavor, leaving the SPD's mark on the early assembly's makeup, and that the SPD's support for Spaak received 'warm support from the socialists of other countries'.[59] The transnational socialist bonhomie grew as the Common Assembly began its real work in 1953–1954 with the construction of the committee system. Transnational cooperation in the Socialist Group intensified. In July 1954, at the height of the international socialist clash on the EDC in the leadup to the negative French parliamentary

[54]Parteivorstand, 6–7 January 1950, AdsD.
[55]Parteivorstand, Erich Ollenhauer, Bericht über die Tagung der beratenden Versammlung des Europa-Rates in Strassburg vom 7. bis 28. Aug 1950, 13 September 1950, AdsD.
[56]Séance du 11 septembre 1952, CSPEC-28, IISH.
[57]Interview, 1952, AGM-106, OURS.
[58]Shaev, 'Estrangement and Reconciliation', 201–28.
[59]Herbert Wehner, 'So war es in Strassburg: Der Anfang der Montan-Versammlung', *Sozialdemokratischer Pressedienst*, 9 September 1952.

vote in August, Mollet told an interviewer that SFIO-SPD 'Cooperation has never been so close and deep'. 'Certainly there are still differences of opinion', but he wished to emphasize his 'passionate satisfaction' with the level of transnational cooperation with the SPD in the ECSC assembly.[60] The sentiment was shared across the border, as Ollenhauer celebrated the Socialist Group's agreement on the assembly's annual resolution. 'This cooperation among socialists', Ollenhauer told the SPD central committee, 'must be considered joyous and promising for the future [*zukunftsträchtig*]'.[61]

This burgeoning transnational politics on European economic integration opened a path for the transnational Socialist Group to become the most cohesive of the three transnational party groups in the Common Assembly, as Sandro Guerrieri and I both argue,[62] and it facilitated the SPD's rapprochement with ECSC High Authority president Jean Monnet. Though internal compromises were often difficult, socialists managed to agree to relatively cohesive positions on the most important areas of community competence by 1955, i.e. dirigisme in the coal and steel industries, a liberal stance on the free movement of workers, a strong community anti-cartel policy and community financing of workers housing and re-adaptation programs. By 1955 the Socialist Group was the primary advocate of expanding the ECSC treaty to enhance its supranational features, a position the Group adopted during the negotiations for a European common market in 1955–1957. When Jean Monnet resigned from the High Authority, the more right-leaning and pro-business René Mayer replaced him. The socialists promptly evolved into an informal opposition to the pro-Mayer majority of liberals and Christian democrats in the assembly. I have shown how the Socialist Group's decision to propose a motion to censure Mayer's High Authority in 1956, the strongest parliamentary weapon available, was a watershed moment in early European parliamentary history.[63] Though rejected by the assembly, it was the first exercise of overt and coordinated transnational partisanship, eliciting commotion among the other groups who preferred consensus in European parliamentary politics.

In the mid-1950s, the first track of SFIO-SPD relations experienced a thaw between the agreement to incorporate Germany into NATO (in lieu of the failed EDC) in early 1955 and the start of Mollet's French premiership in 1956. Mollet seized the opportunity to lure Ollenhauer's SPD into a broader network of pro-European socialists. When Monnet invited Mollet's SFIO to join his new Action Committee for a United States of Europe in July 1955, Mollet did so but emphasized that 'French Socialists consider essential the adhesion of our friends in the German Social Democratic Party'.[64] The same month Heine wrote Mollet to tell him that Ollenhauer would gladly participate on a provisionally personal basis pending formal party approval, which came in January 1956.[65] SPD leaders were attracted to the group's campaign for a European atomic energy community, an area in which Germany might benefit from its more advanced neighbors, but Ollenhauer was also eager to build on the inter-socialist détente unfolding that year. In November, Mollet corresponded with Fritz Erler, a prominent SPD leader. Mollet inquired about a formal SPD adhesion to Monnet's committee and also requested SPD approval to call a conference of socialist parties of European community countries that would bring together party leaders, socialists engaged in the CoE, and the ECSC Socialist Group. Erler reports Mollet saying that, 'For the French Socialists the entire endeavor is only worthwhile if the SPD will participate. Otherwise we will leave it be'.[66] Erler explained to Mollet,

[60]Das NRZ-Interview am Wochenende 'Deutschland muss Militärbeitrag leisten', 3 July 1954, AGM-58, OURS.
[61]Ollenhauer to Hessichen Rundfunk, 31 June 1954, EO-106, AdsD.
[62]Sandro Guerrieri, 'The Genesis of a Supranational Representation: The Formation of Political Groups at the Common Assembly of the ECSC, 1952–1958', in *European Parties and the European Integration Process, 1945–1992*, eds. Lucia Bonfreschi, Giovanni Orsina, and Antonio Varsori (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2015), 393–410; Brian Shaev, 'Flowers but no Bouquet: The Common Assembly's Relations with the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community under Presidents Jean Monnet and René Mayer, 1952–1956', *New Europe College Yearbook 2014–2015*, 347–71.
[63]Shaev, 'Flowers but no Bouquet'.
[64]Mollet to Monnet, 16 July 1955, AGM-113, OURS.
[65]Translation of Heine to Mollet, 29 July 1955, AGM-113, OURS.
[66]Erler to Ollenhauer, 2 November 1955, Carlo Schmid (CS)-1214, AdsD.

in his account, that he would raise the issue with Ollenhauer but it was essential that the conference not take place under the auspices of the Socialist Movement for a United States of Europe, a transnational socialist organization with which the SPD had poor relations (Erler explicitly mentioned the presence of Mozer as a breaking point). Mollet expressed understanding and out of this transnational contact initiated by Mollet emerged both the SPD's adhesion to Monnet's committee, joining there a wide cross-section of socialists and trade unionists who had a quasi-majority vis-à-vis other political tendencies, as well as the Conference of Socialist Parties of the European Communities, which first met in January 1957 and evolved in the next years into a Party Congress of EEC socialist parties that brought together hundreds of socialist delegates and attracted the attention of the international press in a manner that rivaled the SI itself.

Transnational party relations in the ECSC assembly allowed time and space for pro-community SPD parliamentarians to gain expertise, institutional loyalty, and convert these into an internal pressure lobby for the 'community method' within the SPD. At the same time there continued to exist advocates of the older opposition to the ECSC, in particular German Social Democrats in the CoE who privileged relations with the Labour Party and Scandinavian social democrats over continental allies. That the SPD was a party in transition is evident at an Inter-Group socialist party meeting of both transnational socialist groups. There German ECSC and CoE social democrats fought openly in front of a transnational socialist audience over whether European economic integration should take the path of a common market of ECSC countries or a wider trade liberalization under the intergovernmental Organisation of European Economic Co-operation.[67] In the end, the SPD's ECSC deputies gained the upper hand when ECSC and CoE socialists clashed again during internal SPD debates on whether to approve the Treaties of Rome to create the EEC. The SPD had supported pursuing trade liberalization within a regional customs union since the interwar period.[68] In internal discussions in 1957, Willi Birkelbach intervened decisively to push opinion in a pro-EEC direction, and his arguments were picked up again in the final debates in the party central committee.[69] Birkelbach, an important SPD deputy in the ECSC assembly who communicated regularly with Mollet during the community's opening years, went on to lead the transnational Socialist Group of the European Parliamentary Assembly in 1959–1964.

4. Managing decline: German social democrats and the crisis of French socialism in the late 1950s

Mollet's premiership, which began in January 1956, reproduced a pattern that had played out in Labour's postwar government – that the incentives for transnational engagement dropped markedly for party leaderships when they took top positions in national governments. By contrast, the ascent of socialists to executive functions tended to spur a redoubled effort of transnational engagement for fraternal parties, which perceived, or at least hoped, that they might benefit from their cross-border links to advance their own objectives. And so it was for the SPD when Mollet came to office, as Ollenhauer glimpsed an opening for a satisfactory resolution to the Saar question after the failure of a referendum for economic union with France in fall 1955. Here Ollenhauer was plowing fertile ground because the settlement of the Saar question – in which the territory returned to German sovereignty in exchange for economic concessions – by and large reflected previous transnational socialist proposals in 1950–1954 that, though deeply conflictual, were certainly more amicable than nationalist frames of the Saar question in broader national debates.[70] However, SPD hopes – furtive as they may have been – that Mollet might engage seriously in negotiations for disengagement

[67]Analystischer (Kurz-)Bericht der Sitzung der Arbeitsgruppe Wirtschaft der Sozialistische Fraktion in der Gemeinsamen Versammlung (EGKS) erweitert um Mitglieder der Beratenden Versammlung des Europarates am 11. November 1955 in Luxemburg, Gerhard Kreyssig-118, AdsD.
[68]Shaev, 'Liberalising Regional Trade'.
[69]Ibid.
[70]Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism*, 297.

and German reunification, coupled with French violence in the Algerian and Suez wars – created centrifugal forces that increasingly alienated the party leaderships from one another without – again – leading to rupture.

Jean-Paul Cahn describes a conversation between Mollet and Ollenhauer in January 1956 in which Mollet said that he did not expect his government to last long but that he would use the short window available to him to embark on an ambitious series of initiatives including measures for French-German reconciliation.[71] Mollet's remarks had an impact as this was precisely what Ollenhauer told the SPD central committee in March. Pointing to the government's intention to pursue initiatives in European and international affairs – particularly disarmament and German reunification, Ollenhauer urged understanding for the 'tragic' circumstances in which the government was created and told his colleagues that, 'it is our interest to do everything that we can, even if it cannot be much, to make the position of this government easier' because 'an overthrow of Mollet's government can only have as a consequence that a worse government for French-German relations or for European policy comes into existence'.[72] Ollenhauer suspected that Adenauer would seek to undermine Mollet to avoid the possibility of any success for a SFIO-led delegation that traveled to Moscow for high-level discussions with Soviet leadership in spring 1956. Imlay has analyzed the outcome of this trip – in which Markscheffel was deployed again as interlocuter with leading SFIO officials – and concluded that Mollet dissimulated to SPD leaders and to his own party in claiming definitively that the Soviet Union had no interest in German reunification.[73] The SFIO's international secretary unambiguously expressed this in a confidential letter to Ollenhauer in June that contributed to the re-surfacing of geopolitical tensions between the parties in 1956–1957.[74]

Cahn emphasizes the SPD leadership's discontent that it had difficulty contacting Mollet during his premiership and that there were not more occasions for confidential discussions in which SPD views could be sounded out.[75] This indeed was the case but Mollet was prime minister at a particularly trying period in French history and Ollenhauer was able to call Mollet by phone at critical moments, such as on the eve of the Suez invasion if Markscheffel's retrospective account reported by Cahn is correct, though Ollenhauer was to be disappointed in his inability to dissuade Mollet from the disastrous endeavor. Hence, I call for relativizing Cahn's claim here as it makes sense for the SPD to desire more contacts with Mollet during this period while Mollet would have less time and incentive to engage in extended transnational discussions. No doubt the Suez War caused immense damage to transnational socialist relations, though more so between the stridently anti-war Labour Party in opposition and the SFIO in government. The greatest damage was in the area of public opinion because association with Mollet's SFIO became a political burden for other socialist parties. More than anything else besides perhaps Cold War politics, it was the Algerian war that most challenged and exposed frictions within socialist internationalism in Western Europe in the late 1950s.

Cahn, Imlay and Peter Van Kemseke analyze the transnational debate among European socialists on colonial war and decolonization that played out in an intense flurry of inter-socialist transnational diplomacy in 1956–1960.[76] Imlay argues that the consequence of these discussions was a general victory for national over minority rights within the SPD as decolonization gathered pace. Thomas Scheffler focuses on the SPD's evolving view of the Algerian War,[77] while I have analyzed how the French Socialist Party split into two parties, within which the Algerian War served as catalyst for a drop in support for supranational federation and an ascent of Third Worldism as an alternative

[71]Jean-Paul Cahn, *Le Parti social-démocrate et la fin de la quatrième république (1954–1958)* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 1996), 230–1.
[72]Parteivorstand and Parteiausschuss, 10–11 March 1956, AdsD.
[73]Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism*, 387–8.
[74]Translation, Pontillon to Ollenhauer, 22 June 1956, Fritz Heine-147, AdsD.
[75]Cahn, *Le Parti social-démocrate*, 287–8.
[76]Peter van Kemseke, *Towards an Era of Development: The Globalization of Socialism and Christian Democracy* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2006), 127–31; Talbot Imlay, 'International Socialism and Decolonization during the 1950s: Competing Rights and the Postcolonial Order', *The American Historical Review* 118, no. 4 (2013): 1105–32.
[77]Thomas Scheffler, *Die SPD und der Algerienkrieg (1954–1962)* (Berlin: Verlag das Arabische Buch, 1995).

internationalist frame to European socialist internationalism in the 1960s.[78] Whereas both the SFIO and SPD leaderships actually had rather similar conceptions when Mollet came to govern France in the mid-1950s that the colonial territories were not prepared for independence and required French and/or European assistance to lift them into economic and social modernity, the methods Mollet's government deployed led to a re-conceptualization of French imperialism within the SPD leadership. Imlay stresses also the role of the anti-colonialist Asian Socialist Conference, with which SI officials and the SPD were eager to engage, in driving the SI to take an increasingly negative position on Mollet's policies in Algeria.[79] Still, as late as September 1956 Ollenhauer called for 'reservation' and asked his SPD colleagues to 'avoid any controversy with the SFIO'.[80]

As the war continued, Ollenhauer's counsel became untenable. Under growing pressure from leftists determined to display solidarity with colonized and newly independent peoples in 1957–1958, the SPD came to place support for anti-colonial movements above solidarity with the policies of its increasingly besieged neighbor, the SFIO. An overt stance in favor of Algerian independence at the 1958 party congress was forced upon the party leadership by delegates principally concerned with West German relations with newly independent states in Asia and Africa.[81] In 1959–1960, the SFIO leadership demanded that the SPD take action (largely in vain) against SPD deputies who promoted Algerian independence and cultivated contacts including clandestine support with the Algerian revolutionary movement, the *Front de libération nationale* (FLN).[82]

The great strain that this combination of first-order geopolitical issues – the failure of détente under Mollet, the Algerian and Suez Wars – placed on transnational relations is evident in many internal SPD discussions. Most indicative, perhaps, is a comment by Wehner. Reflecting on the SFIO's tenure in government, Wehner told the SPD central committee in June 1958 that, 'Mollet has performed Adenauer's policies but we will be assigned the blame because he is also a Socialist. Here we must swim freely'.[83] Relations hardly improved in the next years. Imlay is right to emphasize the importance of transnational discussions on Cold War disengagement in cooling relations between the parties, in which a shift in Labour's position led it to line up against the SFIO and the Atlanticist PvdA in advocating for a plethora of collective pan-European security arrangements in 1957–1959, including the SPD's ill-fated *Deutschlandplan*.[84] Some of the Schuman- and EDC-era dynamic of internal party division played out in transnational spheres again, as prominent SFIO official Jules Moch appeared closer to the SPD's position in SI meetings than he was to Mollet, as Mollet expressed in frustration back home.[85] That the SPD lionized Moch's disarmament efforts at the UN also brings out the pragmatic nature of some of these inter-personal politics, as Moch had been the *bête noire* of Schumacher back in 1950 when he remarked as French Defense Minister that NATO strategy should be to fight a possible Soviet invasion in Germany rather than in France.[86] The resurrection of Moch within the SPD comes out markedly during the May 1958 crisis in France, when SPD leaders turned to Moch, then Interior Minister, for information as the Fourth Republic collapsed and then deferred to his judgement that there was no alternative to lifting Charles de Gaulle back into office, as is clear in Ollenhauer's account of the ongoing events to the SPD executive.[87] Also of importance was the SPD's reformist break with Marxism in its 1959 Bad Godesberg

[78]Brian Shaev, 'The Algerian War, European Integration, and the Decolonization of French Socialism', *French Historical Studies* 41, no. 1 (2018): 63–94.
[79]Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism*, 409–62.
[80]Parteivorstand, 17–18 September 1956, AdsD.
[81]Cahn, *Le Parti social-démocrate*, 462–4; Scheffler, *Die SPD und der Algerienkrieg*, 52–6.
[82]Mollet, Lettre au SPD: c/o OLLENHAUER (copie à WEHNER), AGM-58, OURS.
[83]9 June 1958, Parteivorstand, AdsD.
[84]Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism*, 359–408.
[85]CD, 22 January 1958, OURS.
[86]Dr. Kurt Schumachers Referat der gemeinsamen Tagung der SPD-Körperschaften am 17. September 1950 in Stuttgart, Kurt Schumacher-52, AdsD; Parteivorstand and Parteiausschuss, 10–11 March 1956, AdsD.
[87]Brian Shaev, 'Inheriting Horror: Historical Memory in French Socialists' and German Social Democrats' Fight for European Democracy, 1945–1958', in *Does Generation Matter? Progressive Political Cultures in Western Europe, 1945–1960*, ed. Jens Späth (Cham: Palgrave Studies in the History of Social Movements, 2018), pp. 171–96.

program, which SFIO leaders viewed as a counter-model rather than inspiration for its own doctrinal discussions in the *Groupe d'études doctrinales* overseen by Moch in 1959–1962.[88] The SPD meanwhile cultivated informal transnational links with leaders of the new Parti Socialiste Autonome (PSA), who opposed the Algerian War and split from the SFIO after Mollet's decision to back de Gaulle and join his cabinet during the fall of the Fourth Republic.

By 1960 the two parties had settled into an uncomfortable new relationship. In a reversal of fortunes, the SFIO was now the isolated, black sheep of socialist internationalism, whereas this had been the SPD in the late 1940s-mid-1950s. Yet even as they disagreed on a wide range of geopolitical and now also ideological issues, there still was no rupture. The SPD did not break from the principle of socialist internationalism that only one party from each country could be member of the SI. It made this clear to the PSA despite the SPD's otherwise good personal relations with its leaders in the late 1950s-early 1960s, some of whom had been old *blumiste* contacts like Mayer, Rosenfeld, and Robert Verdier, who had shared the SPD's opposition to the EDC.[89] Moreover, cooperation continued within the Socialist Group of the new European Parliamentary Assembly, which entered a particularly productive phase as socialist parties prepared common positions on issues ranging from agriculture to cartel and internal market policies. However, the Socialist Group no longer burned as brightly as a refuge for transnational cooperation between the French and German parties because SFIO leaders became conscious and even resentful of the increasingly marginal position of the French party within the group after Mollet left the assembly in 1956. The SFIO – earning on average one-half to one-third of the national vote of the Belgian, Dutch and German parties – had played a central role in the Group's early period largely due to the prestige and seniority of the people it sent to Strasbourg and the appeal of having French-German socialist cooperation parallel the broader community objective of French-German postwar reconciliation, even when (or perhaps especially because) the parties disagreed on European integration. When Mollet became prime minister, however, he also took back with him Albert Gazier, a socialist Euro-parliamentarian and political heavyweight who then served as social affairs minister under Mollet. Beset by a cascade of domestic and international crises, the French presence in the Socialist Group was hollowed out by the late 1950s and even more so after the SFIO parliamentary group in Paris was decimated in the first elections of the French Fifth Republic. For the SPD, the SFIO lost much of its attractiveness as a partner because, near the center of political life in the Fourth Republic, it became marginalized after Mollet left the Gaullist cabinet in 1959. The two-track nature of French-German inter-socialist relations remained, and the Socialist Group largely survived the tremors affecting international socialism elsewhere, but structural factors eroded the balance between French and Germans needed to sustain the mutual satisfaction with transnational cooperation that had peaked in the mid-1950s.

Still, the parties had reason to continue to cooperate in the early 1960s, even as their expectations declined. In 1962, Mollet received a message from Wehner, who had been stinging in his internal criticism of Mollet's time in office just a few years before. 'We strongly desire', Wehner wrote, 'that [Mollet] can speak at our party congress, not only because it would be an occasion for us to redress the lack of comprehension that we had towards him while he was in power but also because it seems urgent to us to manifest a strong solidarity of our parties in European and Atlantic problems'.[90] Wehner's comment echoed the new reality that – in substantial part due to Wehner's influence – the SPD had left behind once and for all any pretention of a neutralized Germany as a means for reunification in 1960–1961 and replaced it with an unambiguous commitment to German NATO membership. A few months after Wehner's letter, the SFIO and SPD issued a joint communique in favor of NATO and a supranational EEC as Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle met to discuss de Gaulle's plans for a Europe redesigned along intergovernmental lines

[88]Pontillon, Note à Guy Mollet, Bureau d'affaires internationales, undated 1961, 27APO5, OURS.
[89]Carlo Schmid to PSA leader Edouard Depreux, 23 June 1959, CS-1496, AdsD.
[90]Pontillon translation to Mollet, 18 May 1962, 27APO5, OURS.

and shorn of US influence.[91] Not only did they unite to oppose a 'Gaullist' Franco-German-led Europe, but at the same time the Congress of Socialist Parties of the European Communities agreed to its first Common Action Program in 1962 after a multi-year drafting process that included the Socialist Group, national leaders and party experts, and consultations with trade unionists and consumer groups. Jaquet reported to the SFIO that, 'This project is far from our true preoccupations but it is a compromise between all European socialists'.[92] Despite some disappointment, 'on the essential points, the position of the SFIO is maintained'. The SFIO executive, upon Jaquet's conclusion, approved the first comprehensive platform for European integration offered by a transnational political family in the early European parliament. The parties followed up in 1963 by coordinating their response to the Franco-German Friendship Treaty, by which De Gaulle attempted to do an end-run around the European treaties.[93] Imlay's argument that the parties 'underwent a process of nationalization' in the late 1950s overlooks these achievements. The structural decline of French socialism and the ascendance of German social democracy, factors external to internationalist practices, transformed the nature of bilateral relations more than any internal 'nationalization' process. It may be time to retire Silone's 'nationalization' cliché once and for all.

5. Conclusion

This article has explored national dimensions of transnational interaction between two socialist parties in the 1950s within a comparative framework. Internal documents of two national parties allow us to uncover the motivations and incentives behind more than a decade of extensive transnational socialist activity as the parties participated in the reconstruction of Western Europe, the launch of the Cold War, decolonization and colonial war, and the opening of the European communities. Moments of crisis in transnational relations analyzed above, when the parties were closest to rupture, are a particularly compelling window through which to consider why they were engaged in such intense transnational contact in the first place. An emotive attachment to socialist internationalism as a tradition, practical concerns coupled with information gathering and opportunities to smooth over public disputes between individuals and parties, and – not least – a hope that the future would be socialist if they could just work together – especially in the new European assemblies – motivated socialists to persist in their transnational engagement through thick and thin. Rehashing contemporary narratives of the failure of socialist internationalism does not suffice to explain such sustained levels of commitment.

With this in mind, it is odd for scholars to expect socialist parties to abandon core domestic political goals due to their commitments to transnational engagement. These were, after all, political parties. That party leaders presented their own international positions as the only proper ones and accused each other of nationalist attitudes, as outlined in the introduction, is also not as surprising or revealing as is often argued if we accept that the parties were committed both to domestic goals and to what Imlay calls the 'practice of international socialism'. Despite deep disagreements on geopolitics and the postwar settlement of the Ruhr, the SFIO and SPD successfully compartmentalized their differences by establishing an autonomous track for transnational relations in European assemblies. Most striking was that this division of labor effectively insulated the Socialist Group of the early European parliament from the major controversies that otherwise undermined transnational socialist relations in the 1950s. Instead of assessing these historical actors within a frankly unrealistic measure of national versus international interests, in which politicians pursuing domestic goals within international spheres are labeled nationalists, we argue that this history reveals the potency of domestic and transnational goals for French and German

[91]Pressemitteilungen und Informationen Betr. Europa-Politik. Gemeinsame Erklärung der Sozialdemokratischen Parteien Frankreichs (SFIO) und Deutschlands (SPD), 2.7.62, 1/HSAA007508, AdsD.
[92]CD, 30 October 1962, OURS.
[93]Kurzprotokoll der Fraktions-Sitzung vom 12. Februar 1963, Bundestagsfraktionssitzungen, 2/BTFD000008, AdsD.

socialists in the 1950s and their commitment to reconciling them. The potency of each comes out most clearly in the deep frustrations that resulted for socialists when national and international ambitions came into conflict.

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