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three-quarters are youths under 20. Jane Kramer, in a vivid and incisive *New Yorker* (June 14, 1993) report on the violence, writes that there are about 6,000 "right extremist" skinheads in Germany, of whom about 3,500 live in what used to be East Germany. The government holds them responsible for 3,000 brutal attacks—lately, about five a day. Forty percent of the attacks have taken place in the new *Länder*, whose people, before the fall of the Wall, had never really known any foreigners.

Chancellor Kohl's response to the new violence has been very low-key. His associates say that that is deliberate, Stephen Kinzer, chief of the *New York Times* bureau in Berlin, reports in the *Atlantic Monthly* (Feb. 1994). "He is acutely aware of the growing potential of far-right political parties, they say, and he wants to make sure that conservative voters do not abandon his Christian Democratic Union in favor of those parties." Nineteen separate elections are taking place this year for local offices, the *Länder* parliaments, the *Bundestag*, and the European Parliament. (The chancellor is elected by the *Bundestag*.) To hold conservative voters, Kohl "is taking a strong law-and-order stance and refusing to identify himself with

unpopular groups such as Turks and gypsies, who are the terrorists' chief victims."

**T**he German government repeatedly insists that "the Federal Republic is not a country of immigration." In reality, however, between 1945 and 1990 nearly 15 million East Germans, ethnic Germans, and political refugees immigrated to West Germany and became citizens, according to University of Osnabrück professor Klaus J. Bade, writing in *Daedalus*. These new citizens, together with 4.8 million Turks and other resident foreigners, amounted to one-third of West Germany's inhabitants in 1990.

The traditional German idea of nation, based on descent, is enshrined in the *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law, or constitution) and is used to deny naturalization to foreigners who have lived in Germany for decades and to their children who were born there. This must change, observers such as Heinrich Winkler believe. "The new formation of the German nation can only succeed," he writes, "if it coincides with a Westernization of the German understanding of nation. In the future, the term 'German' will have to be defined not only by descent, but also by the will to belong to the German nation."

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## Revisiting the Korean War

"New Findings on the Korean War" by Kathryn Weathersby, in *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* (Fall 1993), Woodrow Wilson Center, 1000 Jefferson Dr. S.W., Washington, D.C. 20560.

On June 25, 1950, North Korean troops crossed the 38th parallel and invaded South Korea, starting the Korean War. While most scholars have said that it was absurd to think that North Korea leader Kim Il Sung could have gone ahead without Stalin's approval and aid, some revisionists, such as Bruce Cumings, author of *The Origins of the Korean War*, Vol. II (1990), have argued otherwise. Indeed, Cumings contends that the invasion may have been provoked by South Korea, just as North Korea and the Soviet Union always main-

tained. Weathersby, a historian at Florida State University, contends that a document recently unearthed in the Soviet archives shows what really happened.

The document, "On the Korean War, 1950-53, and the Armistice Negotiations," was prepared in 1966 by Soviet Foreign Ministry staff, apparently to provide background information to Soviet officials who were then considering Soviet aid to the Viet Cong in their war with South Vietnam and the United States. The report, which cites diplomatic telegrams in the Soviet Foreign Ministry archive, proves that the June invasion was not a defensive response to provocation by the South, writes Weathersby. Moreover, "Stalin approved the North Korean [invasion] plan, provided sufficient arms and equipment . . . and sent Soviet military advisers to North Korea to assist in planning the campaign."

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However, Weathersby adds, the Soviet document also shows that the assumption—made by President Harry Truman’s administration and by many scholars—that the initiative for the attack came from Stalin is false. “This was Kim Il Sung’s war; he gained Stalin’s reluctant approval only after persistent appeals (48 telegrams!).”

The question of who called for war is crucial, in Weathersby’s view. By the spring of 1950, she says, “the Truman administration had concluded that South Korea was not of sufficient strategic importance to the United States to justify military intervention to prevent a North Korean takeover of South Korea. However, for the *Soviet Union* to attempt to gain control over South Korea was a different matter entirely.”

The Soviet document, Weathersby says, suggests (but does not state) “that Stalin supported Kim’s plan only because he calculated that it would *not* involve military conflict with the United States.” Other documents in Soviet archives, as well as memoirs recently published in Russia, she says, “indicate that Stalin was surprised and alarmed by the U.S. intervention. He evidently blamed Kim for having badly misjudged the situation.”

But Washington, too, misjudged the situation, Weathersby thinks: “The nearly unanimous opinion within the Truman administration was that [the invasion] was a Soviet probe; if the United States did not resist this act of aggression, the Soviet Union would move next into West Germany, or perhaps Iran.” In reality, Weathersby believes, the North Korean attack on South Korea was not intended as “a test of American resolve.”

## Remember Panama?

“Panama: Casablanca without Heroes” by Silvana Paternostro, in *World Policy Journal* (Winter 1993–94), World Policy Inst., New School for Social Research, 65 Fifth Ave., Ste. 413, New York, N.Y. 10003.

More than three years after the United States invaded Panama with 24,000 troops, toppled General Manuel Antonio Noriega’s military regime, and brought Noriega to Florida to stand trial on drug trafficking charges, the country, no longer in the spotlight, “has reverted to old hab-

its,” writes Paternostro, a freelance journalist.

Although no longer centralized, as under Noriega, the drug trade still flourishes, and official corruption remains a problem. A Panamanian legislator was arrested in Tampa, Florida, last October and charged with conspiring to smuggle 150 kilos of cocaine into the United States. Javier Chérigo, deputy director of Panama’s restructured and demilitarized intelligence police, says his 800-man force on the drug beat spends most of its time investigating drug trafficking on the streets of Panama, where rival Colombian and Panamanian drug gangs battle one another. Police corruption, Chérigo says, is his biggest problem.

In addition to Panama’s 3,500 lawyers, “who for less than \$1,000 can form and register a company on paper in less than 24 hours,” Paternostro notes, the country has “104 banks, an iron-clad secrecy law, and no restriction on the amount of cash entering the country.” In other words, Panama has all the classic ingredients for money laundering on a grand scale. In 1992 alone, total banking center deposits increased from almost \$2 billion to \$19 billion.

Lawlessness has bred more than 100 private-security companies since 1989. Many ordinary Panamanians pack guns. Now, many fear that the political campaigns leading up to what some describe as Panama’s first free elections this May could be marked by bloodshed. Guillermo Endara, who was sworn in as president at the time of the U.S. invasion, is not running. Of those who are, Ernesto Pérez Balladares, the candidate of the Revolutionary Democratic Party, which was the political arm of Noriega’s regime, appears to be leading.

The turnover of the Panama Canal to Panama in 2000, in accordance with the 1977 treaty negotiated with the United States, is not a hot election issue this year. Unemployment seems to be Panamanians’ biggest concern. But many Panamanians, Paternostro says, are no longer enthusiastic about the prospect of control over the canal. The U.S. Department of Defense employs about 5,400 Panamanians and pumps more than \$250 million into Panama’s economy each year. Some Panamanians have proposed that their government renegotiate. “You can’t eat sovereignty,” one observed.