



The CONGRESSIONAL
STUDY GROUP
on GERMANY





Dear Friend,

The Congressional Study Group on Germany is the flagship program of the United States Association of Former Members of Congress (USAFMC) and is recognized on both sides of the Atlantic for its important role in furthering the bilateral relationship between Germany and the United States over the last 20 years. The Study Group on Germany is a bipartisan organization with approximately one-third of the Members of the U.S. Congress participating and all regions of the United States represented. Though much has changed since the Study Group's early beginnings in 1983, its goal has remained the same: to facilitate communication, dialogue, and understanding between Members of Congress and Members of the Bundestag and among other transatlantic leaders.

The Congressional Study Group on Germany is funded by a key institution grant from the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) and through sponsorship from members of the Business Advisory Council (BAC), a group of corporations interested in a cooperative German-American relationship. With the financial help and support of GMF and the BAC, the Study Group has been able to successfully host hundreds of events with many distinguished guests, including Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, former Minister of Defense Rudolf Scharping, former Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, CDU Opposition Leader Angela Merkel and, most recently, President of the German Bundestag, Wolfgang Thierse. In addition, the Study Group hosts an annual, week-long seminar for Members of the U.S. Congress and the German Bundestag to exchange ideas and discuss issues of importance to both nations.

The CONGRESSIONAL STUDY GROUP *on* GERMANY

Although there are many shared goals and values to celebrate between the United States and Germany, there are also fundamental differences in experience, in war, and in history that need to be recognized and addressed in order for this transatlantic partnership between the two nations to prosper. The Congressional Study Group on Germany strives to initiate dialogue between the law-makers of Germany and the United States, thereby providing them with a network of personal and professional contacts in order to better equip them to meet the global challenges of today.

Trade, intelligence sharing, the war on terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are just a few issues that require attention from Germany and the United States. As it has been doing for over 20 years, the Congressional Study Group on Germany will remain a constructive forum for discussion on these and all other important questions that drive the German-American relationship.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Buechner". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jack Buechner

President, U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress

December 2004



TRANSATLANTIC TIES

The end of the Cold War, the rise of a global market economy, and the terror of September 11th, 2001 have all contributed to the creation of a new world order. In this complex and interconnected new world, open lines of communication are essential to establish cooperative and mutually beneficial relations between countries.

The U.S.–German bilateral relationship is no exception. These two nations share a tightly interwoven history and set of interests that are far-reaching and ever-binding. From the rebuilding of Germany after World War II and the incredible “Wirtschaftswunder” that followed, to the close military and security cooperation of today, Germany and the United States have worked side-by-side to ensure the safety and prosperity of democratic values and market economies. The Congressional Study Group on Germany is a vital forum for these two nations, and it has helped to strengthen this transatlantic friendship for over two decades.

The Congressional Study Group on Germany is one of the largest and most active organizations linking Members of the U.S. Congress to legislators of another country, in this case the German Bundestag. The Study Group on Germany is bipartisan and is comprised of roughly one-third of the U.S. Congress. It is unique because it provides the opportunity for legislators from both countries to speak frankly and candidly with each other, face-to-face, about issues of substance and pertinence to both their nations. Such meetings generate a better understanding and foster closer cooperation between the two nations.

The Congressional Study Group on Germany is a project of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress, a 501(c) (3) tax-exempt organization, which serves as the secretariat for the Study Group. The Study Group is an unofficial and informal organization open to all Members of Congress. There are no dues or membership fees, and legislators may participate in Study Group programming as much as they wish. Those Members who want to be kept informed of Study Group activities may become Associate Members of the Study Group. The Congressional Study Group on Germany is funded by a grant from the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) and by contributions from German and American corporations that make up the Study Group’s Business Advisory Council (BAC).

Since its birth as an informal group in 1983 and its formal inauguration in 1987/88, the Congressional Study Group on Germany has sponsored hundreds of events to strengthen transatlantic ties. Such activities include the Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar, congressional staff trips to Germany, and policy discussions at the U.S. Capitol as part of the Distinguished Visitors Program. Together, these events and programs reinforce the close U.S.–German friendship by creating special opportunities for meaningful dialogue.

The 21st century brings new geopolitical challenges and makes a U.S.–German partnership not only necessary but essential. In order to face these new challenges and succeed, both countries must continue to cooperate and work together. The Congressional Study Group on Germany serves as a bridge for political decision-makers from both countries to initiate dialogue and keep the doors of communication open. Through close U.S.–German contact and interaction, the Study Group on Germany hopes to ensure the strength and vitality of transatlantic ties for many years to come.

Transatlantic Ties





Clockwise from above: The Hon. Lee Hamilton (D-IN, 1965-1999), Founding Chairman of the Congressional Study Group on Germany, addresses participants in the first German-American Day Celebration on October 6, 1988.



Members of the Congressional Study Group on Germany meet with Chancellor Helmut Kohl at the Federal Chancellery in Bonn on May 29, 1990.

Members of the Congressional Study Group on Germany meet with Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher at the Federal Foreign Ministry in Bonn on April 3, 1991.

“As the founding Chairman of the Congressional Study Group on Germany, I am pleased to see that it has become such an important instrument of dialogue between the United States and Germany. There is no substitute for the kind of exchange between Members of Congress and the Bundestag that is enabled through the Study Group. Members form personal relationships with one another; our two countries gain understanding and insight into one another; and cooperation between the U.S. and Germany is empowered.

The transatlantic relationship has had its ups and downs in recent years. Programs like the Congressional Study Group on Germany help us forge and maintain bonds of friendship that get us past the bumps in the road. Germany is an important country, and the German-American relationship is important for the entire world. The Study Group plays a central role in reminding us that what unites us is far more extensive than what divides us.”

-The Hon. Lee H. Hamilton, President, The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

A look back...

The Congressional Study Group on Germany traces its origins back to 1977 when Dr. Karl Mommer, a former President of the German Bundestag, invited the Hon. Jed Johnson, Jr. (D-OK, 1965-1967), Executive Director of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress at the time, to help him form the Association of Former Members of the German Bundestag. Former Members on both sides of the Atlantic were the catalyst for a number of initiatives that culminated in the creation of the Congressional Study Group on Germany.

The History of

THE CONGRESSIONAL STUDY GROUP ON GERMANY

Spring 1977: The Association of Former Members of the German Bundestag was founded.

Spring 1978: Meeting between the Hon. Jed Johnson, Jr. and former German Ambassador to the United States, Wilhelm Grewe.

Spring 1980: Inaugural meeting between the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress and the Association of Former Members of the German Bundestag.

Spring 1981: At a seminar in Wisconsin, Dr. Bruno Heck, President of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, invited former Members from both nations to a joint conference later that year.

Fall 1981: A meeting between former Members of Congress and the Bundestag took place at Lake Como in Italy. For the first time, American participation was funded by a grant from the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF). At this conference former Members developed the idea that bringing together U.S. Congressmen and German legislators would improve U.S.–German relations.

October 1983: USAFMC hosted a banquet at the U.S. State Department to honor the founding of the first German settlement in the United States. During the event it was noted that, though the Bundestag possessed an active German–American Parliamentary Group, no counterpart organization existed within the U.S. Congress. This frustrated visiting Members of the German Bundestag who found it difficult to meet with Members of Congress during their visits to America. To address this problem, USAFMC informally founded the Congressional Study Group on Germany.

Fall 1987: Representative Lee H. Hamilton (D-IN), Chairman of the European Subcommittee of the House International Relations Committee, became the founding Chairman of the Congressional Study Group on Germany. He formally launched the Study Group in 1988 with the support of a grant from GMF to the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress.

December 1998: Because of its success in the House of Representatives, Senator William V. Roth, Jr. (R-DE) spearheaded Senate membership for the Congressional Study Group on Germany and became a Co-Chair of the Study Group along with Senator Tom Daschle (D-SD).

February 1999: The Business Advisory Council (BAC), a group of German and American corporations interested in furthering U.S.–German relations, was created when Peter Weichlein, now Executive Director of USAFMC, was hired to give special attention to the Study Group. To supplement the grant from GMF, the BAC contributes dues to the Congressional Study Group on Germany in an effort to cover administrative and overhead costs associated with running the program. Former Member of Congress E. Thomas Coleman, currently Vice President of Government Relations at BASF Corporation, collaborated with Mr. Weichlein to form the BAC and presently chairs the council. The BAC currently has 12 members.



Clockwise from above: Then-Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping and the Hon. E. Thomas Coleman (R-MO, 1976-1993), Chairman of the Study Group's Business Advisory Council, in March 2001.



Rep. Tom DeLay (R-TX), the Hon. Romano L. Mazzoli (D-KY, 1971-1975) and German Foreign Minister Genscher in Bonn, Germany, in July 1989.

The Hon. E. Thomas Coleman (right), speaks with the Hon. Lee Hamilton, Founding Chairman of the Congressional Study Group, on Germany and the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Richard von Weizsaecker.

“The economic relationship between the United States and Germany is extremely important to the future of both nations. Working with the Congressional Study Group on Germany, the Business Advisory Council plays an integral role in encouraging communication on both sides of the Atlantic.”

-The Hon. E. Thomas Coleman (R-MO, 1976-1993), Chairman of the Business Advisory Council

“The transatlantic partnership has been a foundation of U.S. foreign policy since World War II. The end of the Cold War and the attacks of September 11, 2001 have brought with them a new set of challenges and opportunities for the Alliance. The Congressional Study Group on Germany reinforces the deep political and cultural bonds that exist between the United States, Germany and Europe.

-Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-NE), Co-Chairman of the Congressional Study Group on Germany, 2000-Present

Transatlantic dialogue...

Germany receives more foreign direct investment (FDI) from the United States than from any other nation. On the other side of the Atlantic, German corporations such as Siemens, BASF, Volkswagen, and DaimlerChrysler are mainstays of the U.S. economic landscape. Employing over 12 million workers who benefit from high wages, high labor and environmental standards, the transatlantic economy is booming at \$2.5 trillion dollars as we move into the 21st century (Daniel Hamilton and Joseph Quinlan, *Partners in Prosperity*, Center for Transatlantic Relations, Johns Hopkins SAIS, 2004). Considering the large amount of business conducted between Germany and the United States, open and frank exchanges between both nations are essential to ensure continued prosperity.

THE BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL

After becoming Program Director for the Congressional Study Group on Germany in 1999, Peter Weichlein worked with former Member of Congress E. Thomas Coleman (R-MO, House of Representatives 1976-1993; 1989 Chairman, Congressional Study Group on Germany) to leverage corporate support for Study Group activities. This collaboration has resulted in the founding of the Business Advisory Council (BAC) to the Congressional Study Group on Germany, of which the Hon. E. Thomas Coleman, currently Vice President of Government Relations at BASF Corporation, is Chairman. Today, the BAC has 12 members: Allianz, BASF, DaimlerChrysler, DHL, Deutsche Telekom, EDS, Lockheed Martin, Representative of German Industry and Trade, RWE, SAP, Siemens, and Volkswagen.

The contributions from our BAC members offset the Study Group's administrative costs and support valuable additions to Study Group programming. These funds, combined with the grant from the German Marshall Fund of the United States, have resulted in:

- numerous mailings to Members of Congress in an effort to increase Study Group participation
- the distribution of briefing memoranda to the foreign relations staff of Study Group members to inform them of important current events in Germany
- the posting of Study Group news on the website of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress
- outreach to senior congressional staff
- heightening the profile of the Study Group by co-sponsoring events with the German-American community in Washington, D.C.
- the publication of a Study Group brochure

Since the end of the Cold War, transatlantic trade and commerce have prospered tremendously, and there are many German and American companies that see the value in open political communication. The Business Advisory Council is an invaluable supporter of the Congressional Study Group on Germany, and as a result, the Study Group can provide even more opportunities for transatlantic discourse between the United States and Germany.



*Above left: Pariser Platz, Berlin
(Photo credit: The German
Information Center)*



*Above right: U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC*



*Craig Kennedy, President
of the German Marshall Fund
of the United States.*

“The Congressional Study Group on Germany is an effective channel for German and American lawmakers to voice their viewpoints on the transatlantic relationship and on global affairs more generally. Global change requires cooperation between allies to be effective, and the Congressional Study Group on Germany offers Members of the German Bundestag and U.S. Congressmen the opportunity to exchange ideas openly and find common solutions to challenges facing both of their respective nations.”

*-Craig Kennedy, President of the
German Marshall Fund of the United States*

“The United States has no bilateral relationship more important than the one with The Federal Republic of Germany. Germany is a leading member both of NATO and of the European Union. It has Europe’s largest economy. And tens of millions of Americans trace their ancestry to Germany. Our two countries share common interests and ideals.

For many years the Congressional Study Group on Germany has played a vital role in facilitating contact between, on one side, German parliamentarians and other German political figures, and with Members of Congress on the other. In the wake of recent policy differences between Washington and Berlin, the work of the Congressional Study Group on Germany is more important than ever. I wholeheartedly support its work and wish it continued success in the future.”

*-Sen. Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Ranking Democratic Member of
the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate*

Common action, common goals...

Twenty-five years after Secretary of State George C. Marshall made his famous speech in 1947 at Harvard University announcing the Marshall Plan, German Chancellor Willy Brandt announced a gift from the Federal Republic of Germany in the amount of 150 million DM to establish a permanent memorial to the Marshall Plan assistance. During the ceremony Chancellor Brandt thanked the United States and called the Marshall Plan “one of the most formidable and at the same time successful achievements of the United States of America (...) the memory of the past has become the mission of the future.”

The History and Mission of THE GERMAN MARSHALL FUND OF THE UNITED STATES

It was this gift that led to the creation of the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), an American public policy and grant-making institution dedicated to the promotion of greater cooperation between Europe and the United States. In addition to its own programs and research studies, the GMF supports individuals as well as organizations involved with transatlantic issues.

In 1986, the German government renewed its commitment to GMF with an additional gift bringing the endowment to 245 million DM. After the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 and German Reunification in 1990, GMF moved its headquarters to East Berlin making GMF the first private American organization to move its headquarters to “the other side” of the Wall. Additionally, GMF became active in assisting other organizations and institutions to move to the east during the first few months after the fall of the Wall. During the 1990s, GMF aided in the establishment of programs to assist with political, economic and environmental reforms during governmental transitions in Central and Eastern Europe.

Today GMF continues to work in ways that foster common action between the United States and Europe on the most pressing transatlantic issues. GMF also continues to work on strengthening democratic institutions in the spirit of the Marshall Plan. The Congressional Study Group on Germany shares GMF’s goal of fostering strong ties across the Atlantic and is pleased to be a GMF Key Institution. Thanks to the generous support and funding of the German Marshall Fund of the United States, valuable program activities, such as the Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminars, have been made possible.

“The memory of the past has become
the mission of the future.”

– *Willy Brandt*



Clockwise from above: Participants in the 2004 Congressional Staff Tour to Germany stop for a photo in front of Germany's historic Brandenburg Gate.



Participants in the 21st Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar during a visit to New Ulm, Minnesota, August 21-27, 2004.



Participants at the 16th Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar held in Wildbad Kreuth, Germany, March 30-April 2, 1999.

"I have had the honor of participating in the Congressional Study Group on Germany for over a decade, including serving as Chairman from 2004-2005. The ability to have a consistent dialogue between Members of Congress and our colleagues in Germany is an invaluable foreign policy tool. I look forward to continuing the important relationship between the United States and our friends in Germany."

-Rep. Gil Gutknecht, Chairman of the Congressional Study Group on Germany, 2004/05

"I was so pleased to host the 19th Congress-Bundestag Seminar in Southeast Texas. As long as we keep meeting, talking to each other and listening to each other, Members of Congress and the Bundestag will lead our constituents in learning about one another's needs and the values we share. The Study Group on Germany bridges the goodwill extended from Americans to Germans, and vice versa."

-Rep. Nick Lampson, Chairman of the Congressional Study Group on Germany, 2002/03

Communication...

The Congressional Study Group on Germany supports numerous activities that foster transatlantic cooperation between the United States and Germany. These activities range from the Annual Congress–Bundestag Seminars to policy-oriented events on Capitol Hill. The cumulative result is an active organization that strives to facilitate open communication between two world powers and that encourages dialogue among its political decision-makers.

SEMINARS

The Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar: Snapshots from 1995-2004

The Annual Congress–Bundestag Seminar is a week-long conference that brings Members of the U.S. Congress together with their counterparts in the German Bundestag for in-depth discussions about issues that affect the transatlantic relationship. In addition to current and former lawmakers from the United States and Germany, representatives from the U.S. State Department, the German Foreign Ministry, and the business and academic community also participate. The Annual Seminar provides legislators from Germany and the United States with the opportunity to examine subjects of mutual interest and to have a frank exchange of opinions and ideas. The Seminar has been an immeasurable tool in creating and reinforcing personal friendships and ties between Members of Congress and Members of the Bundestag. Discussion topics are dictated by current events and issues influencing U.S.–German relations. Locations for the Seminars vary each year between cities in Germany and the United States. The Annual Congress–Bundestag Seminars constitute the pinnacle of Study Group activities for each year. Always interesting and informative, they prove essential to accomplishing the Study Group’s ultimate goal of solidifying the German–American partnership. For over 20 years the Congressional Study Group on Germany has coordinated Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminars. Following are snapshots of the last ten seminars:

21st Annual Congress–Bundestag Seminar:

St. Paul & Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 21-27, 2004:

The 21st Annual Seminar was co-sponsored by the Heinrich Böll Foundation and hosted in the Twin Cities of Minnesota, the home state of the 2004 Study Group Chairman, Rep. Gil Gutknecht (R-MN). Topics included intelligence sharing, the 2004 U.S. elections, the War on Terror, and transatlantic trade and investment with a special focus on global agriculture, which allowed for a discussion about EU policy. Cultural activities included a visit with the author Garrison Keillor, a Minnesota Twins baseball game, a cruise on the Mississippi River, a performance of Native American Indian dancing, and a trip to New Ulm, a German settlement. Honored guests included State Secretary Tilo Braune, from the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Housing, State Secretary Alexander Mueller, from the Federal Ministry of Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture, Wolfgang Ischinger, German Ambassador to the United States, and Craig Kennedy, President of the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

20th Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar:

Berlin/Heidelberg, April 11-17, 2003:

The 20th Annual Seminar was co-sponsored by SAP and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation. Topics included the reconstruction of Iraq, trade disputes between the United States and Europe over Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), taxes (specifically the treatment of Foreign Sales Corporations under U.S. tax law), and unemployment levels. Distinguished guests included Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, Wolfgang Ischinger, German Ambassador to the United States, and Daniel Coats, U.S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany.

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*Above left: 17th Annual Congress–
Bundestag Seminar held April 17-21,
2000, in Niagara Falls, New York.*

*Far left: MdB Volkmar Schultz;
far right: Hon. John LaFalce.*

*Above right: 19th Annual Congress–
Bundestag Seminar held March
25-29, 2002, in Galveston, Texas.*



“The Congressional Study Group on Germany provides a venue to strengthen an often overlooked, but extremely significant relationship: the one between the two nations’ legislatures. Solid personal and professional ties between the people’s elected representatives gives all of us a better understanding of the needs and concerns of German and American citizens, which in turn helps promote cooperation and the respectful resolution of differences when they arise.”

*-Rep. William Delahunt (D-MA), Vice-Chairman of the Congressional
Study Group on Germany, 2005*

“The dialogue with our American colleagues is of great interest and importance to me and all the Atlanticists of the German Parliament. Our annual meetings have contributed and will contribute to strengthen the relationship between our parliaments and countries on the basis of mutual respect and sympathy. As equal partners it is possible to have different opinions once in a while, but still continue to go out for the same goal.”

*-MdB Hans-Ulrich Klose, Chairman of the Parliamentary
Friendship Group USA in the German Bundestag*

...cooperation...

I am pleased to serve as the Co-Chair of the Congressional Study Group on Germany and strongly support its efforts to foster communication and cooperation between Germany and the United States. Germany continues to be a driving force in Europe and our transatlantic relationship has never been more important. I commend the Congressional Study Group on Germany for bringing together German and American leaders and encouraging greater understanding between our two nations."

-Sen. Tim Johnson (D-SD), Co-Chairman of the Congressional Study Group on Germany, 1994-Present

**19th Annual Congress–Bundestag Seminar:
Galveston, Texas, March 25-29, 2002:**

The 19th Annual Seminar was hosted in the district of then-Study Group Chairman, Rep. Nick Lampson (D-TX). Additional trips to Beaumont, Port Arthur, and NASA's Johnson Space Center were carried out as part of the Seminar. The group also had the opportunity to tour the Texas Energy Museum and the BASF FINA Petrochemicals plant. Seminar discussions focused on U.S. and German domestic issues, for example child custody disputes between the two countries, as well as global security, and the United Nations. MdB Volkmar Schultz, then-Chairman of the Bundestag's German-American Parliamentary Group, led the German delegation to Texas.

**18th Annual Congress–Bundestag Seminar:
Heringsdorf/Usedom, Germany, April 9-12, 2001:**

The 18th Annual Seminar took place on Usedom Island in the Baltic Sea region of Germany. Proceeding and following the trip to Usedom, the U.S. delegation spent time in Berlin for meetings with German federal government officials. Additional excursions were carried out to Peenemuende, the site of Nazi Germany's rocket and missile research, and Eggesin Military Base, where elements of the Multinational Corps Northeast (MCN) were being trained for NATO deployment to Kosovo. Topics of discussion included stability in the Balkans, NATO and EU enlargement, Germany's defense budget, the Kyoto Treaty, the Chechen conflict, and China's entry into the WTO. Honored participants included Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer and Brigitte Schulte, Parliamentary State Secretary of the German Federal Defense Ministry.

**17th Annual Congress–Bundestag Seminar:
Niagara Falls, New York, April 17-21, 2000:**

The 17th Annual Seminar was hosted in the district of then-Study Group Chairman Rep. John J. LaFalce (D-NY). With over 60 participants, the meeting was one of the largest ever organized by the Study Group. The main topics of discussion included domestic politics, foreign policy and security issues, and economic relations. During the course of the Seminar, the Members visited several sites of natural, historical, and cultural significance in and around Niagara Falls and also participated in a taping of the Mark Russell Show. His Excellency, Juergen Chrobog, German Ambassador to the United States, participated in Seminar activities.

**16th Annual Congress–Bundestag Seminar:
Wildbad Kreuth, Germany, March 30-April 2, 1999:**

The 16th Annual Seminar took place at the Hanns Seidel Foundation's Conference Center in Wildbad Kreuth, Germany. Additional trips to Munich, Prien, Herrenchiemsee, and Tegernsee also took place. The new German government under Chancellor Schroeder, NATO and the war in Kosovo, and the introduction of the Euro were the main topics of discussion. Honored participants included Mr. George A. Glass, Consul General of the U.S. Consulate in Munich.

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*Above left: U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC*

*Above right: Inside the German
Bundestag, Berlin, Germany
(Photo credit: The German
Information Center)*



“Real insight comes through personal experience. The Congressional Study Group on Germany is a unique forum for leaders from both sides of the Atlantic to speak with each other openly. For me, it has been an invaluable network to bring Germany’s message to the U.S. Congress. Relationships formed over the years through the Study Group have helped both sides to understand one another and to keep the transatlantic partnership focused on our common goals, even in times of disagreement and transatlantic friction. With the Study Group, my work in Washington has been greatly facilitated.”

*-Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger,
German Ambassador to the United States*

“The Congressional Study Group on Germany has, for more than two decades, made an enormous contribution to the German–American relationship. The annual seminars, meetings and study tours they sponsor provide U.S. Congressional participants and their German Bundestag counterparts the opportunity to learn from each other and help maintain and strengthen a transatlantic foundation of trust. These programs are one of our best guarantees that U.S.–German relations remain close, strong and mutually beneficial.”

*-Ambassador Daniel R. Coats, U.S. Ambassador
to the Federal Republic of Germany*

...and understanding...

"The Congressional Study Group on Germany has been without question one of the highlights of my service thus far in Congress. The group is a tremendous tool for fostering German-American relations and encouraging cooperation and understanding. I look forward to participating for a long time to come."

-Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT)

**15th Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar:
Virginia Beach, Virginia, April 6-9, 1998:**

Seminar subjects touched on the Euro, bilateral trade and extraterritorial laws, and policies toward the Middle East. During the Seminar, participants visited Stihl, Inc., the U.S. subsidiary of the German power tool maker. The visit stimulated an animated discussion on the impact of globalization on national economies. NATO enlargement was also discussed with NATO commanders at the Norfolk headquarters of the Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic. Admiral Harold W. Gehman, Jr., USN, Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic (SACLANT), presented an overview of NATO, its chain of command, and its adaptation to enlargement. Thomas Matussek, Deputy Chief of Mission of the German Embassy, provided participants with his perspective on German-American relations and the important role played by the Congressional Study Group in cultivating those relations.

14th Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar: Kurt Schumacher Academy/ Bad Muenstereifel, Germany, March 24-27, 1997:

The 14th Annual Seminar was held at the Kurt Schumacher Academy of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the co-sponsor of the Congress-Bundestag Seminar. NATO enlargement, bilateral and international trade relations, and domestic economic and political issues were the main topics of discussion. In commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Marshall Plan, Dr. Norbert Lammert, Parliamentary State Secretary of the German Federal Ministry of Economics lead a discussion entitled "A New Marshall Plan? The Economic Recovery in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe." The German and American delegates also took a short bus trip to Bonn for high-level political meetings. The group met with: Wolf-Michael Catenhusen, SPD Parliamentary Group Leader; Peter Hartman, Parliamentary State Secretary from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Dr. Paul Laufs, Parliamentary State Secretary of the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, who spoke on the subject of "International Trade, Telecommunications, International Finance, and the WTO." Seminar participants then traveled to Frankfurt, where they met with representatives of the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany to hear of their first-hand experience of doing business in Germany.

**13th Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar:
Cape Girardeau, Missouri, April 9-12, 1996:**

Federalism, economic issues, foreign relations, and domestic politics were subjects that provided for much debate during the 13th Annual Seminar. This was the first time that the Seminar was held in the Midwest and the German delegation appreciated the opportunity to get to know the "Heartland" of America. Missouri is also the home state of the 1995 Chairman of the Congressional Study Group on Germany, Rep. Bill Emerson (R-MO). During a cruise on the Mississippi River participants were briefed on "The Mississippi River and Tributaries Project" by Brigadier General Robert Flowers, President-Designee of the Mississippi River Commission. A private bus tour of Perry County, Scott County, and a stop at Altenburg, the German Lutheran Church, were some other highlights of the program. MdB Werner Hoyer, Deputy Foreign Minister, MdB Peter Hinze, former Chairman of the German-American Parliamentary Group, and Juergen Chrobog, then-German Ambassador to the United States, were in attendance.

**12th Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar:
Dresden, Germany, April 18-21, 1995:**

Six years after the fall of the Wall, Annual Seminar participants visited the Eastern German city of Dresden, where discussions revolved around the subjects of German global peacekeeping, the environment, and vocational training and education in Germany and the United States. Also, a closer examination of U.S. domestic politics was a topic of discussion because the timing of the Seminar corresponded with 100 days of Republican leadership in the U.S. Congress. Seminar sponsors included Phillip Morris, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, and the Robert Bosch Foundation.

Previous seminars were held in Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia, Konstanz, Bonn, Munich, Koenigswinter, and Berlin, Germany.



Clockwise from above: Wolfgang Thierse, President of the German Bundestag, addresses members of the Congressional Study Group on Germany at a reception at the U.S. Capitol on September 14, 2004, during his first official visit to Washington, D.C.



German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer talks with the Hon. Tom Bliley (R-VA, 1981-2001) during his visit on May 9, 2000.



Horst Koehler, then-Managing Director of the World Bank, at an event hosted by the Congressional Study Group on Germany on June 21, 2001.

“For more than two decades, the Congressional Study Group on Germany has worked to deepen further the close U.S.–German relationship and foster personal contact and understanding between the legislative branches of our two countries. It is precisely this kind of program that cements the longstanding cooperation between the United States and Germany and guarantees this special relationship will carry on to the next generation of leaders.”

-U.S. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell

“As anyone with a sense of history realizes, the transatlantic relationship is the crucial cornerstone of global security, of peace and stability not just in Europe, not just in the United States, but across the whole world. To call this cornerstone into question would be worse than folly.”

-German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer

Partnership...

"Dialogue is key for any successful relationship and the Congressional Study Group on Germany provides a vital connection between the leaders of the United States and Germany. Our two nations have a long and intertwined history which I believe is honored by both nations. I have been on three trips with the Study Group to Germany while I was in Congress. The knowledge I gained and the experiences I had on those trips were invaluable and gave me greater insight into German culture and politics as well as the importance of U.S.–German relations. I support and encourage the continued work of the Study Group."

-Governor Bill Richardson, New Mexico

ACTIVITIES

The Distinguished Visitors Program

The Congressional Study Group on Germany coordinates special events on Capitol Hill for distinguished German visitors throughout the year. Events include roundtable discussions, receptions, breakfasts/luncheons, and trips with the visiting German dignitaries to local sites around Washington. Such events allow for Members of the U.S. Congress to meet German political decision-makers and give them the opportunity to hear about German perspectives with regard to a specific subject.

Among many others, the following political figures have been hosted by the Congressional Study Group on Germany as part of its Distinguished Visitors Program:

- President of the German Bundestag, Wolfgang Thierse
- President of the Bundesrat, Dieter Althaus
- Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer
- Then-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Klaus Kinkel
- Opposition Leader, MdB Angela Merkel
- Then-Chairman of the CDU/CSU, Friederich Merz
- Defense Minister, Peter Struck
- Then-Minister of Defense, Rudolf Scharping
- Then-Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher
- President and CEO of Siemens, Heinrich von Pierer
- German Ambassador to the United States, Wolfgang Ischinger
- Chairman of the FDP Faction, Wolfgang Gerhardt

Congressional Staff Tours and Other Initiatives

The Congressional Study Group on Germany leads a group of senior-level, congressional staffers to Germany each year for a Study Tour so that they can learn about current political, business, and cultural trends in Germany. The group traditionally meets with notable German politicians and military officials in cities such as Berlin and also visits the corporate headquarters of German blue-chip companies like DaimlerChrysler in Stuttgart or SAP in Heidelberg. Cultural excursions to towns such as Potsdam are also part of the program. This annual Study Tour educates senior congressional staffers on the importance of the German–American relationship, helps establish a network of personal contacts, and creates an audience on Capitol Hill that is knowledgeable and interested in transatlantic affairs.

In addition to annual Congressional Staff Study Tours, the Study Group on Germany periodically cooperates with other international organizations and programs, such as the Congress–Bundestag Staff Exchange Program, the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies (AICGS), and the German political foundations in Washington. Working with other groups that are involved in German–American affairs creates synergies and expands the network of the Congressional Study Group on Germany.

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“The Congressional Study Group on Germany does important work. In my view, the relationship between Germany and the United States remains very significant to both countries. I am very proud that my Administration presided over the tearing down of the Berlin Wall and helped to bring about unification of Germany. These were historic events in which the U.S. played a supportive role, and it is important that we continue to be active in strengthening the American-German relationship.”

-former President George Bush, October 21, 2004



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