
George Gerolimatos

A Dissertation submitted to the faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of History

Chapel Hill
2014

Approved by:
Christopher Browning
Chad Bryant
Konrad Jarausch
Terence McIntosh
Donald Raleigh
ABSTRACT

George Gerolimatos: Structural Change and Democratization of Schleswig-Holstein’s Agriculture, 1945-1973
(Under the direction of Christopher Browning)

This dissertation investigates the economic and political transformation of agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein after 1945. The Federal Republic’s economic boom smoothed the political transition from the National Socialism to British occupation to democracy in West Germany. Democracy was more palatable to farmers in Schleswig-Holstein than it had been during the economic uncertainty and upheaval of the Weimar Republic. At that time, farmers in Schleswig-Holstein resorted to political extremism, such as support for the National Socialist German Workers’ Party (Nazi). Although farmers underwent economic hardship after 1945 to adjust to globalization, modernization and European integration, they realized that radical right-wing politics would not solve their problems. Instead, farmers realized that political parties like the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) represented their interests. Farmers in Schleswig-Holstein felt part of the political fabric of the Federal Republic.

One of the key economic changes I investigate is the increased use of machines, such as threshers, tractors, and milking machines. My main finding was that agriculture went from a labor- to capital-intensive business. Despite the massive destruction and dislocation wrought by the Third Reich and World War II, agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein recovered remarkably quickly after 1945. Farmers believed their hard work made the “economic miracle” of the 1950s possible, and used this belief to justify requests for federal aid in subsequent years. Over time there were fewer farms, but these averaged larger in size, specialization and sophistication.
Despite this fact the cornerstone of agrarian politics, the family farm, persisted in the public consciousness. The move toward European integration meant that West German farmers looked to the federal agriculture ministry and their government in Bonn as an ally, not antagonist, in negotiating the path toward a common agricultural policy. I investigate serious crises in West German agricultural politics, particularly in the mid-to late-1960s. Nevertheless, farmers’ protest in Schleswig-Holstein demonstrated that they had become part of the democratic political culture of the Federal Republic. The main farm lobby adapted remarkably smoothly to the rapid changes in agriculture.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank all those who helped me realize this project: my advisors Prof. Christopher Browning and Prof. Dr. Uwe Danker, as well as Dr. Sebastian Lehmann and the team at the IZRG, the archivists and librarians in Schleswig, Kiel, Koblenz, and St. Augustin, my committee members Professors Konrad Jarausch, Terence McIntosh, Chad Bryant and Donald Raleigh, and my parents for their support. A big round of thanks to those who read drafts of my work, foremost Sara Bush, Derek Holmgren, and Friederike Brühofener.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables and Figures.................................................................viii

List of Abbreviations..................................................................ix

Prologue.......................................................................................1

Introduction...............................................................................9

1. Schleswig-Holstein’s Agriculture, 1933-1948.........................36
   1.1 Introduction......................................................................36
   1.2 Agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein, 1933-1939: the “Golden Years”?..38
   1.3 Agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein, 1939-1945: War and Defeat.......47
   1.4 Conclusion......................................................................60

2. Surmounting the Crisis in Agriculture 1945-1948.......................61
   2.1 Introduction: Schleswig-Holstein’s Agriculture in 1945..............61
   2.2 British-German Relations, “Self-Help” and The Currency Reform.....66
   2.3 New Self-Administration...................................................86
   2.4 Denazification and Land Reform.........................................106
   2.5 Conclusion......................................................................121

3. Legislative Integration into the Social Market Economy, 1949-1955..124
   3.1 Introduction......................................................................124
   3.2 Market Regulation Laws (1950-1951)......................................125
   3.3 The “Milk War” (1951).......................................................136
   3.4 The Agriculture Law (1955)...............................................152
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

1. Map of Schleswig-Holstein.................................................................2
2. CDU election poster............................................................................128
3. CAP pricing mechanism.................................................................177
4. Farmers’ Protest March 1968..........................................................231
5. Farmers’ Protest in Heide 1928.........................................................231
6. Farmers’ Protest in Heide 1968..........................................................232
7. Farmers’ Assembly...........................................................................233
### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACDP</td>
<td>Archiv für christlich-demokratische Politik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AdG</td>
<td>Working Group for Landowners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APO</td>
<td>Extra-Parliamentary Opposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHE</td>
<td>Bund der Heimatlosen und Entrechtete League of Expellees and those Deprived of Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Common Agricultural Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCG/BE</td>
<td>Control Commission for Germany/British Element</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU</td>
<td>Christian Democratic Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPA</td>
<td>Comité des Organisations Professionelles Agricoles de la CCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBV</td>
<td>German Farmers’ Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DKP</td>
<td>German Communist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNVP</td>
<td>German National Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP</td>
<td>German Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVP</td>
<td>German People’s Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAGGF</td>
<td>European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEC</td>
<td>European Economic Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAD</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDP</td>
<td>Free Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GATT</td>
<td>General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IZRG</td>
<td>Institut für Zeit- und Regionalgeschichte Schleswig-Holsteins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPD</td>
<td>Communist Party (Weimar Republic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPD</td>
<td>National Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSDAP</td>
<td>National Socialist Workers’ Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNS</td>
<td>Reichsnährstand Reich Food Estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>Social Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSV</td>
<td>South Schleswig Voting Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VELF</td>
<td>Verwaltungsrat für Ernährung Landwirtschaft und Forsten Bizonal Food and Agriculture Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZEL</td>
<td>Zentralamt für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft Central Food Office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prologue: Three farms in Schleswig-Holstein in the late 1940s

Perhaps the best place to begin the history of Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture after 1945 is with the landscape itself. Numerous studies on Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture begin their narrative with a discussion of the three main geographical regions running north to south in this Land.¹ See Figure 1.

¹ Although it is tempting to equate a West German Land with a US state, I stick to the German designation throughout the text.
Formed during the Ice Age, these marked divisions are reflected in the climate, soil, and other factors which have shaped the typical kinds of agriculture in each. The eastern strip of land along the Baltic (including the capital, Kiel) is hilly and was once heavily forested. In the areas bordering Mecklenburg in the east large farms and estates prevail, though not on quite the same scale as the East Prussian _latifundia_. The central moor (_Geest_) has sandier soil, making large-scale grain cultivation (like one sees in the east) unprofitable. Here smaller, mixed farms predominate. The social structure is different as well. Finally, the western marsh region along the
North Sea has extremely fertile soil and a rich tradition in livestock farming. A system of dykes not dissimilar to neighboring Holland has been constructed over the centuries to hold back floods. Snapshots of farming in each region in the 1940s, when contrasted with how they looked at the end of the 1960s, will demonstrate the magnitude of change due to structural transformations in agriculture.

What then did a typical farm in each geographical sub-region look like in the late 1940s? How was it run, what principles governed it? Above all, what challenges did farmers face in re-aligning themselves politically, modernizing operations economically, and re-thinking social norms? Reinhard Jung’s 1991 Bauern oder Unternehmer offers us an example from the central Geest region in the district (Kreis) of Pinneberg. In 1949 (the first year in which reliable agricultural statistics were taken) a typical family farm, consisting of three full-time family members (often three generations) and seasonal workers, was 15 hectares in total size, divided approximately in half between land for crops and land for grazing. A farmer might own three horses, eight cows, twenty pigs and sixty chickens, and most of his income came from livestock farming (selling pigs and milk). Much of the grain crops went toward animal feed. Farms equipped at this time with technology like milking machines, threshers and tractors were the exception rather than the rule. The more enterprising farmer might own a few used vehicles, borrow others from neighboring farmers or, in a few cases, hire firms (Lohnunternehmer) during the harvest.

---

2 Reinhard Jung, Bauern oder Unternehmer? 35-45. Jung based his description on intensive investigation of district archives as well as interviews with farmers. Note that Jung also describes a typical marsh farm, 46-48. Consider using Horst Stern, Untersuchung über die Lebensverhältnisse von zwei Bauerngemeinden im “Hamburger Ring” (1953/54), 65-85. Jung mentions that although the size of full-time family farms might vary in the moor and marsh, generally they followed similar patterns of cultivation. One could not, however, talk of “typical” part-time farms. Jung, 7.

3 1 hectare equals about 2.47 acres.

4 The wife typically took care of the chickens and made her pocket money from selling eggs.
A farmer’s day and working methods were largely determined according to biological rhythms, that is, the well-being of his animals. The proximity of Hamburg meant that milk production was especially important in the district of Pinneberg. Work began at 5:00 AM in the milking shed and shifted to the fields (with a two-hour lunch break) thereafter. The day might end around 7:00 PM, again in the shed. Jung divides his subsequent description into two sections, beginning with work in and around the house (Hofarbeit) and then moving to the fields (Feldarbeit).

The cows were milked twice a day by hand, with the milk in pails being transferred to canisters. A horse-drawn carriage transported the milk cannisters to dairies (twice a day during summer to prevent spoilage). The stalls were cleaned and the animals fed. There being no central water in most farms, the troughs had to be filled with pails of water carried from nearby streams. The pigs were fed a high-protein diet, most of which came from the farm itself. The horses were an important status symbol and were essential for field work as well as for pulling heavier loads to market or town. Thus they enjoyed conscientious care. The routine of tilling the soil, casting seed and maintaining the crops was a complicated system based on the time of year, weather, availability of labor, the type of crop, and many other factors. A farmer would be extremely reluctant to change anything fundamental in this system. Winter was hardly “down time.” Any work which could not be done in the summer months was taken care of, especially repairs. Farms were almost completely self-sufficient with regard to food.

A patriarchal system usually prevailed. The male farmer made the most important decisions and divided the work as he saw fit. Traditionally he took care of field work, while housework, stall work and the garden were women’s domains. The notion of a marriage between equal partners (Partnerschaftsehe) was still rare, as were marriages between farmer and non-
farmer. Children were expected to contribute as much as their smaller size and school requirements would permit. The central motivation for everyone in the family was keeping the farm viable. For this generation in particular, investment in new machines and a timely retirement were difficult. Older farmers mistrusted the younger generation and craved security after two world wars and repeated economic calamities. Although his farm was relatively small and the work very hard, the farmer (and, more to the point, the Bauernverband) considered this type superior to Soviet collective farms and large-scale farms in the United States. Private ownership ensured greater personal commitment to its well-being, and the more manageable size rendered the farm better able to withstand economic crisis. So the argument went. To summarize a typical farm from the central moor in the late 1940s: it was a family operation, though dependent on wage labor; its production was mixed (crops and livestock); it was largely self-sufficient, usually run according to the judgment of the male farmer and more importantly the demands of the livestock and crops; paramount was keeping the farm in the family; machines were in short supply.

For the neighboring marsh farms to the west, Jung describes a typical farm of thirty hectares, worked by three family members, a permanent wage-earner, and seasonal workers as necessary. Eighteen hectares were devoted to crops, ten for grazing and two for fruit. In the animal sheds one might find five horses, fifteen pigs, five cows for their milk and seven for their meat. The single biggest difference from the central moor was in the soil quality. Whereas the central moor soil was relatively light and sandy, the land on the North Sea was very fertile and heavy. Four

\[5\] Jung, Bauer oder Unternehmer, 16.
and often six horses were hitched to plows to till the heavy earth. The order in which one planted and harvested (Fruchtfolge) had gone on practically unchanged for centuries.⁶

Another example of a marsh farm can be gleaned from Andreas Thomsen’s memoirs.⁷ In it he describes the hardships the family from the North Friesian village of Rückenstadt experienced from 1933-1945. In 1937 Andreas’ father had to surrender the tires of his Opel P4 to the rearmament effort. There was electric power for only a few hours a day. In 1939 thirty-five cows stood in the shed on a farm of thirty-two hectares; by war’s end there were only eighteen left. Adolf Thomsen, the eldest son and apparent heir, was killed in action on the Eastern Front.

In the spring of 1948 Andreas’ father was ready to call it quits. Fortunately he was able to lease his property for twelve years to his daughter and son-in-law. They inherited the following live inventory: eighteen head of cattle, five pigs and three draft horses. Due to the war the machines—three wagons (Kastenwagen), two plows and three harrows (Eggen), a baler (Selbstbinder), a lawn mower, a small thresher and “lots of junk” (viel Kleinkram)—were all old and in need of repair.⁸ Thomsen further relates that the lease (Pacht) was for eighty Marks a month with free heating and that his parents, having devoted their lives to the farm, were glad to pass it along to their daughter and son-in-law, even if he was a smith by trade. In any case he soon learned how to run the farm well. In 1954 Andreas and his parents were able to move into the part of the house (Abnahme) where refugees had lived up to that point.

---

⁶ Junge, Bauer oder Unternehmer, 46.


⁸ Thomsen, Die Thomsen’s von Rückenstadt, 110.
A management study of an estate named Kogel reveals how a farm in eastern Holstein (bordering Mecklenburg) looked in the early 1950s. There was, above all, an enormous size difference between it (1290 ha, of which 755 ha is used for farming) and those in the central Geest examined above. The challenges facing large estate owners were quite different from smaller family farms. The estate owner had to worry about finding appropriate farm hands. In the immediate aftermath of World War II he might also have feared losing some of his land in a government mandated land reform to settle refugees.

The basic philosophy behind the running of the Kogel estate was very different from that of a small family farm. In order to maintain such a large farm, the owner Wilhelm Loos needed hundreds of people working for him: cottagers and sharecroppers (Landinsten und Deputanten), wage-earners, seasonal help, and so forth. This in turn required a staff of accountants, secretaries, overseers (Vögte) and deputies to keep the farm operating smoothly. For Loos the continued profitability of the farm was paramount, not merely that it remain within the family. This in turn meant that the governing principle of all farming and labor organization was to steadily increase the fertility of the soil and livestock. In order to calculate this, detailed bookkeeping was absolutely necessary, which Loos kept since his purchase of Kogel. Most of Mr. Loos’s time was taken up in the office, not in the fields. Although the accounts for the small family farms do not mention bookkeeping, even if it was kept, it is unlikely to have been nearly as detailed as that of Kogel, with accountants dedicated to it.

---

9 Robert Kob, *Aufbau und Leistung eines Schleswig-holsteinischen Großbetriebes: Gut Kogel* (Kiel, 1954). This is an extremely valuable source because the proprietor of the farm Mr. F.W. Loos put all his documentation (bookkeeping, income, tax records, investments, etc.) at the author’s disposal, a rarity.

10 Although the estate had existed for centuries, Mr. Loos acquired it only in 1916.


12 In his description of farms in the moor, Jung unfortunately does not mention whether detailed record-keeping was the norm.
Whereas a farmer in the moor would often divide his land equally between cultivation and grazing, the ratio in Kogel was much more heavily weighted toward cultivating crops. The author of the study on this farm was able to track a steadily growing proportion of land devoted to cash crops (*Verkaufsfürchte*), whereas a farmer in the *Geest* tended to maintain the existing balance among the crops. On a modern farm like Kogel the manager had more machines at his disposal than in the moor farms: tractors, threshers, potato and sugar beet harvesters. Nearly all the work done in the livestock division of the farm was still by hand, however.
Introduction

My central concern is change in agriculture over time. Schleswig-Holstein after 1945 offers an ideal case study for agricultural structural change for many reasons. After World War II Schleswig-Holstein could no longer avoid facing the realities of industrialized agriculture. After total defeat and British occupation, its administration and political structures were forcibly opened and rendered more transparent. Catastrophic food shortages exacerbated by a huge influx of refugees recast social relations and completely revamped its economic structures.

Unlike in the 1930s, when the Depression sent agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein and many other areas of Germany into an economic tailspin and rapidly led to widespread political radicalism, riots, and finally support for National Socialism, agriculture found its niche in the Federal Republic. Farmers in Schleswig-Holstein faced crises in two postwar periods (after World War I and World War II), but how they reacted at these times could hardly have been more different. My two most important questions regarding Schleswig-Holstein’s post-war agricultural transformation are how farmers in the region came to adopt the Federal Republic’s democratic order and what its economic structure became by the early 1970s.

Once the repercussions from defeat, British military control, population influx, and threatened collapse of the food supply had stabilized by 1949, structural change did not cease. On the contrary, an observer on a farm in Schleswig-Holstein in 1949 would have been hard-pressed to see much resemblance between it and an agricultural operation twenty years later.

This phenomenon is neatly captured by a catchphrase that summarized the experience of structural change in agriculture: “wachsen oder weichen,” roughly translated as “grow or get
“grow or get out.”¹ Farmers, facing competition, new technology, and the bewildering array of regulations from the Federal Republic and European Union, faced the stark choices of integration or a career change.

The IZRG Structural Change Project

Another justification for focusing on this particular area is that this dissertation is part of a larger project organized by the Institut für Zeit- und Regionalgeschichte Schleswig-Holsteins (hereafter IZRG), a research institute affiliated with the University of Flensburg. The chairman of the institute, Prof. Dr. Uwe Danker invited me to write on the topic of structural change in Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture after 1945 to complement projects on heavy industry, education, the military, and tourism.² By analyzing these five key sectors of Schleswig-Holstein, all of which underwent great change after 1945, the project aims to offer the first comprehensive history of this Land³ in the postwar period.

The overarching questions of the project concern the causes and consequences of structural change. The five sectors were chosen because of their demonstrable economic, political, and social significance in Schleswig-Holstein and their interconnectedness. The project also covers different levels of state and society: the primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors of the economy, education, and the armed forces. Each sector is being investigated as an independent dissertation. Nevertheless, the authors are in dialogue with each other and devise, as much as possible, common definitions of key terms such as “structural change.” Therefore, the

¹ Interestingly, the phrase “grow or get out” was a byword in agriculture in the United States at the same time.

² See Uwe Danker, Robert Bohn and Sebastian Lehmann, “Strukturwandel: Schleswig-Holstein als Land. Skizze eines Forschungsprogramms.” The other projects are dissertations currently being written. I am in regular contact with their authors.

³ Land (plural Länder) is an administrative term roughly synonymous with the US state.
dissertations will complement each other to narrate Schleswig-Holstein’s postwar history. My dissertation thus also contributes to regional history.

Although all sub-projects use 1945 as a starting point, the end point for each varies slightly. For agriculture, I have followed Knut Borchardt’s periodization.4 By the 1973-74 oil crisis, agriculture in West Germany had transformed to such a great extent that my research questions on integration lose their explanatory edge. Moreover, a colleague at the IZRG will pick up where I end my narrative.

My research on Schleswig-Holstein’s postwar history, focusing on agriculture, follows a political, economic, and social axis. I argue the economic change of agriculture was rapid and profound, significantly outstripping deeper political and social developments. The adoption of democracy and the change of rural society occurred over a longer time frame. In other words, most farmers were happy to purchase a John Deere tractor if they could afford it and vote for the Christian Democrats, but they would have grown hot under the collar at the notion of the “Americanization” or “industrialization” of farming. They were the most reluctant to accept change in their self-perceived social identity. Over time, farmers became little more than commodity producers. Their occupation was gradually stripped of its intangible but powerful values and associations: carriers of social mores and traditions and pillars of political stability. Indeed, as my discussion of 1968 will demonstrate, farmers could contribute to political instability.

My argument links democratization to structural change. Massive federal and state subsidies rendered structural change acceptable to most farmers. Conversely, the perception that

political parties, particularly the Christian Democratic Party (CDU), took farmers’ concerns seriously, in contrast to what farmers perceived during the Weimar Republic, helped farmers value democracy’s give and take. I demonstrate that even a politically troubled, economically underdeveloped, and socially traditional rural area could change its politics and modernize its farming.

Agriculture’s role in the postwar economic boom concealed a great irony. In Schleswig-Holstein and other rural areas, agrarians lobbied successfully for agricultural exceptionalism. This argument held that farming was subject to particular factors—environmental, market, and otherwise—that made it impossible for agricultural incomes to keep pace with other sectors during the “economic miracle.” For instance, many agricultural experts, farmers and their representatives feared that the demographic phenomenon of “flight from the land” (Landflucht) would lead to economic stagnation and political marginalization. In fact, precisely because of its disadvantaged status, agriculture was provided a protected economic niche in the Federal Republic. The massive subsidies prevented most farmers from experiencing economic distress similar to that of the 1920s, and accommodation with political parties removed most farmers’ incentive to join radical movements.

The case for agrarian exceptionalism had long been a mainstay in German domestic politics, arguably dating back to the 1870s and 1880s. In the Empire and into the Weimar Republic, “the marriage of iron and rye” (i.e., cooperation between industrialists and large landowners) had been markedly anti-democratic. The difference now was that the neo-corporatist politics of the Adenauer years—the close cooperation among agrarian lobbyists, political parties and their farming constituents—succeeded in integrating agriculture into the Federal Republic. Most farmers and their spokesmen felt that they generally stood to gain by participating in the
system and that their interests were respected. It remains to be seen whether Hans-Peter Ullmann’s claim that the national Bauernverband “stood firmly on the grounds of parliamentary democracy and pursued a logical policy restricted to economic interests” also held true for the Schleswig-Holstein organization.5

Choosing 1945 as a starting date to chart the transformation of agriculture in Germany needs little justification. After World War II, German agriculture was arguably under the greatest pressure ever to change politically, economically, and socially. The democratization of the farmers in Schleswig-Holstein was an acculturation process tested periodically from 1950 to 1968. By that time, the manner in which farmers and their representatives practiced politics was practically indistinguishable from other social groups in the Federal Republic or, indeed, in Western Europe. By the mid-1970s through the early 1980s, structural change decelerated considerably due to lack of alternative employment in industry following the oil crisis of 1973 and consequential economic slowdown thereafter.6 Thus, ending my narrative with the early 1970s makes sense.

My illustration of the political and economic integration of farmers in Schleswig-Holstein in the Federal Republic contributes to the wider discussion of how democracy took root in Germany after World War II. Too often a simplistic notion that Allied presence and the economic miracle of the 1950s alone stabilized the Bonn democracy holds sway.7 Documenting a change in political culture at the Land level will illustrate how liberal-democratic values were inculcated at the grassroots, a more certain indicator of stability than the carrot-and-stick

---

5 Hans-Peter Ullmann, Interessenverbände in Deutschland (Frankfurt/M, 1988), 254: Der Bauernverband steht vielmehr auf dem Boden des parlamentarisches Systems und verfolgt in diesem Rahmen eine konsequente, auf die Vertretung wirtschaftlicher Interessen beschränkte Politik.”

6 Wilson and Wilson, German Agriculture in Transition (2001), 33.

approach of material well-being and continued Allied presence. The modernization of agriculture and the democratization of rural society in Schleswig-Holstein were prerequisites for the “economic miracle” of the 1950s and 1960s, which is the wider relevance of my work.

Research Areas

My dissertation investigates the history of Schleswig-Holstein’s postwar agriculture along the trajectories of politics, economics and society. A particular methodology informs each strand of research. At the risk of over-simplification, the idea unifying these approaches is what facilitated or obstructed change in politics, economics, and society.

Without resorting to crude economic determinism, I argue economics was the leading factor in Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture after 1945. After all, I consider farming primarily as an occupation! I investigate the transformation from peasant (Bauer) to farmer (Landwirt) and the shift from farming as class or estate (Stand) identifier to “just business.” What factors facilitated or hindered farmers’ ability to adapt to economic change? Structural change is more than a catalogue: mechanization, concentration of farms, and specialization. Structural change required above all a mental shift in how farmers, their families, and those representing them understood agriculture’s political influence, economic importance, and social function. The leitmotiv in West German agricultural policy was the family farm. The pressures of structural change, particularly the move toward European integration, cast doubt on the viability of this farming system by the late 1960s at the latest.

The economic thread of my dissertation is guided by Gerold Ambrosius’ definition of structural change as a “long-term, non-cyclical or seasonal change in the aggregate,” in this case

---

8 Stressing economic dimensions as determinants of democratization, strictly speaking, suggests that West Germans became consumers first and democrats second.
agriculture. In Ambrosius’ survey of structural change, he describes Walt Rostow’s stage theory, including the agrarian stage, the “take off” to industrialization, and the eventual post-industrialist stage. In Germany’s case, the stages I am concerned with cover roughly the years 1870-1940 and 1950-70, when West German society moved from industrialization to mass consumption. The main advantage is the interdisciplinary approach, which fits well with my analysis along avenues of politics, economics, and society. For Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture, economics was usually the leading factor for politics and social questions.

My approach also borrows from Jean Fourastié’s classic three-sector model, in which structural change amounts to the movement of labor from the primary to secondary and tertiary sectors. Although agriculture can be perceived as the “loser” in this process, those previously employed in it move to jobs in industry or trade. Thus, the strength of this model is in demonstrating how changes in Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture affected heavy shipping and other sectors that scholars with whom I work are currently investigating. Those who left agriculture did not simply disappear from the labor market or descend into poverty, but entered higher-paying city jobs in industry or services.

To address the political aspect, I ask how the institutional changes in government, political parties, and lobby groups helped or hindered farmers’ ability to accept the democratic order. Moments of conflict, such as the “Milk War” of 1951, or legislation, such as the 1955

---


11 Some of the detailed questions that emerge in subsequent chapters are: To what extent were structural-institutional measures in the mid-1940s (such as denazification) a new beginning in agriculture’s politics? How did the close
Agriculture Law, are investigated for what they reveal about agriculture’s political response to change. The benchmarks by which I will gauge democratization include both institutional and mental frameworks. These benchmarks include farmers voting for firmly democratic parties; farmers’ political reactions to their diminishing importance in an industrialized economy; their rhetoric and behavior when protesting; their expectations from and faith in state and federal governments; changes in local politics; and the receptivity of their subculture to previously suppressed voices, such as those of women, recent settlers from the East, consumers, and the younger generation. Many in rural society (indeed, in conservative, bourgeois milieus throughout Germany) harbored aversion to compromise and the “fragmentation” of multi-party politics associated with the Weimar Republic. I am curious about how such attitudes changed over time. I chose these markers because by rejecting these notions, farmers in the same region in the 1920s slid into radical politics and eventually support for the National Socialist Workers’ Party (NSDAP).

I group these factors as constituents of “political culture.” This concept was first coined by sociologists and political scientists. Two approaches emerged to define a given country’s political culture: quantitative and qualitative. The first, trying to quantify a group’s attitude toward democracy by way of opinion polls and questionnaires, was pioneered in the founding relationship between farming organizations and the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein come about? Was political compromise considered a sign of a healthy democracy rather than as a symptom of political fragmentation? How did protest during the “Milk War” in 1951 and that of 1968-69 compare with the protest of the late 1920s? Did farmers’ language and behavior indicate that agriculture had internalized the democratic model? Did the emergence of a new generation of farming leaders in the late 1960s herald a new direction in structural change?

12 Rudy Koshar, Marburg.
text for political culture studies, Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba’s *The Civic Culture*.\(^{13}\)

Comparing Germany, Italy, Mexico, the United States, and Great Britain in terms of each society’s basic attitudes toward its own political system, they developed an ideal of “civic culture” which, not surprisingly, found Germany wanting. The “subaltern” political culture of Germans ensured that democracy in the Weimar Republic enjoyed only a tenuous popular backing at best. This fact meant that institutions such as the armed forces, justice system, and civil administration (including agricultural agencies) were staffed by many who were, at best, lukewarm about and frequently hostile to democracy.

Although public opinion polls and quantitative methods were more advanced in the United States in the 1940s and 1950s than in Germany, it would be inaccurate to say no independent tradition of empirical research existed.\(^{14}\) The two themes of most interest to both German and Anglo-American researchers were the questions of popular support for the National Socialists during the Third Reich and postwar attitudes toward the party system in West Germany.\(^{15}\) An important means of tabulating popular attitudes toward democracy was to record what people felt about the parliamentary system. Ralf Dahrendorf argued that both German social institutions and people in general harbored aversion to social conflict. This aversion


\(^{15}\) For a helpful introduction, consult Max Kaase, Sybille Frank and Ekkehard Mochmann, “Nach der Katastrophe – Anmerkungen zur Entwicklung des west-deutschen Parteiensystems in den fünfziger Jahren,” André Kaiser and Thomas Zittel (eds.), *Demokratietheorie und Demokratieentwicklung. Festschrift für Peter Graf Kielmansegg* (Wiesbaden, 2004), 265-78. They cite studies from the early 1950s in this example.
translated into preferences for coalition government. Dahrendorf’s assertion was corroborated on an empirical basis. Although prevailing attitudes toward parties could offer important clues about German political culture, they could not offer a complete picture. Attitudes toward the parliamentary form of democracy, particularly in the German case with the fragmented, factional experience of Weimar in most people’s minds, could veer off the question of democracy. Quantitative methods are useful for gauging changing perceptions over time and offering comparisons between societies (the comparative approach is strongly favored by political scientists), but deeper explanations of why groups held certain attitudes must be found elsewhere.

In contrast to the quantitative method, a more recent hermeneutic approach treats political culture as a phenomenon that transcends individual attitudes. German political scientist Karl Rohe is a prolific exponent of the hermeneutic method. For Rohe, political culture is a world constituted through “basic ideas about politics and those operative norms connected to those ideas” and encapsulates the “basic assumptions about the political world.” He describes political culture as the “unwritten constitution” of a social group. This unwritten constitution circumscribes the boundaries of what is politically thinkable, utterable, and feasible. Political

---

16 Ralf Dahrendorf, *Gesellschaft und Demokratie in Deutschland* (Munich, 1968), 472.
culture thus contains cognitive, normative, and aesthetic-habitual categories; systems of ideas; symbols; and scripts, expressed in varieties of ways, such as monuments, rituals, symbols, and myths. A process-based or hermeneutic understanding of political culture informs more recent works, which tend to focus on political discourse analysis of elites rather than attempting to assess opinions of particular political systems.\textsuperscript{21} The contested authority to assign meaning to a given political event or act ties into Verba’s oft-quoted phrase that political culture “refers not to what is happening in the world of politics, but to what people believe about these happenings.”\textsuperscript{22}

In this dissertation, I favor the hermeneutic approach for practical reasons. One of the clearest markers for nominal integration into a democratic system (i.e., a minimal level of acceptance) is consistent voting for democratic parties. However, when Germans went to the ballot box, only their age, sex, and the size of their community were recorded, not their occupation. We have only indirect evidence that farmers in Schleswig-Holstein tended to vote for the CDU. As Timothy Allan Tilton noted, the public polling conducted on attitudes toward democracy in the British zone was not sufficiently large to be representative for Schleswig-Holstein. Allan Borup’s recent dissertation unearths the key role the CDU played in converting skeptics of democracy in Schleswig-Holstein.\textsuperscript{23} Those skeptics include former National Socialists, former military personnel, and newly settled refugees. Farmers rarely appear in his narrative, which is surprising because they were one of the CDU’s pillars of support. Instead of

\begin{flushleft}\textsuperscript{21} E.g., Sebastian Ullrich, \textit{Der Weimar-Komplex. Das Scheitern der ersten deutschen Demokratie und die politische Kultur der frühen Bundesrepublik 1945-1959} (Göttingen, 2009).\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}\textsuperscript{22} Sidney Verba, “Conclusion: Comparative Political Culture,” in Lucien W. Pye and Sidney Verba (eds.), \textit{Political Culture and Political Development} (Princeton, 1965), 513-17, here 516.\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}\textsuperscript{23} Allan Borup, \textit{Demokratisierungsprozesse in der Nachkriegszeit. Die CDU in Schleswig-Holstein und die Integration demokratieskeptischer Wähler} tr. Detlef Siegfried (Bielefeld, 2010).\end{flushleft}
considering how farmers voted for each election, I examine farmers’ protest culture: how they behaved in public, what symbols (such as flags) they used, and their public rhetoric.

Because this dissertation is in certain respects a regional history, it follows that I consider local politics. Traditionally, in Schleswig-Holstein and most Länder, this idea was termed Honoratiorenpolitik by Max Weber. Honoratioren or “local notables” were persons with no particular training in politics, who were economically independent and enjoyed considerable social prestige. They dominated communal politics in Schleswig-Holstein for centuries. In the case of farmers, well-to-do or even wealthy landowners would have been the actors. They served in the legislature, led the farm lobby, sat in church councils, and so on. This form of politics was patriarchal, closed, and privileged. The Third Reich was a brief interlude in which party affiliation challenged entrenched politics, but the closer one looks at the grassroots of farmers’ political organization, the less National Socialism ruptured personnel. Simply put, from the early twentieth century through the two World Wars, the same men in terms of economic status, education, and social sensibilities ran local politics up to the Land level. My dissertation probes whether this foundation changed. To what extent did the personal and political profile of rural leadership change to reflect the growing influence of women, refugees, and the younger generation?

Konrad Jarausch’s After Hitler will provide the basic framework for conceptualizing the long-term nature of democratization of agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein and the necessary evolution of political culture. Jarausch wrestles with the difficult question of how an omnipotent occupying force (i.e., the Western Allies) could instill a spirit of freedom and


democracy to a population that felt defeated, not liberated. In his analysis of the interplay between economics and politics, Jarausch notes that contemporary observers wondered whether the very success of the “economic miracle” of the 1950s camouflaged opportunistic “consumer” democrats. I wish to turn this claim on its head, examining whether farmers’ democratization and modernization made the “economic miracle” possible. Many farmers certainly believed their hard work and changing politics facilitated the boom. I recreate Jarausch’s approach in analyzing memoirs and interviews held in district archives to grasp how individuals conceived of and reacted to changes in their occupation and political culture. Answering this question has important implications for the corollary of the Weimar Republic, where inflation and the Great Depression convinced many farmers that democracy failed. The point is whether farmers and those living in the countryside in Schleswig-Holstein came to believe they had a stake in democracy’s failure or success.

Jarausch’s illumination of transformations in society connects with the third strand of my research. With political structures and economic conditions in mind, I am interested in exploring the “third level” beyond economy and society—farmers’ worldviews, mentalities, and habits. From the social aspect, I am primarily interested in how farmers perceived, reacted to, and explained democratization and structural change. What does oral history tell us about the perception and reaction to the demographic-structural change after World War II? Was leaving agriculture perceived as a loss or opportunity, both among agronomists and farmers themselves? How did farmers’ social relations (with refugees, within the family, and within the larger

---


27 Ibid, 148.

community) reflect structural change? My method focuses on interrogating memoirs, recorded interviews and other “ego documents” under the broad rubric of Alltagsgeschichte. More specifically, I am interested in farmers’ mentalité, an idea that Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre developed in the Annales school. Interviews illuminate some common rules of behavior, moral codes, and assumptions about farm life. Since I rely on collected interviews from one district around Hamburg (Stormarn), I make no claim to uncover farmers’ collective unconscious or to offer a complete psychological profile. Rather, I wish merely to understand some important features of their way of thinking and perceiving as they faced so many challenges in postwar West Germany. Robert Mandrou formulated a handy description of this mode of investigation:

> The history of mentalities aims at reconstructing the patterns of behavior, expressive forms and modes of silence into which worldviews and collective sensibilities are translated. The basic elements of such research are concepts and images, myths and values recognized or tolerated by groups or the society as a whole, and which forms the content of collective psychologies.30

The political thread of my work examines democratization, the economic aspect considers structural change, and the social theme addresses integration, or how farmers fit into the Federal Republic. Over time, farmers became more difficult to distinguish from consumers. They were integrated into the welfare state. The Land did much to integrate refugees and expellees into Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture, through land reform, housing projects, and education. By the early 1970s, the issue of social integration shifted from the nation-state to the European level, focusing on whether West German agriculture was fully compatible with the European Union. My story ends just when this process began in earnest.

---

29 Ibid, 74.

30 Cited by Schöttler, 74-75.
Historiography

The main contributions I wish to make to the historiography of the Federal Republic are in political, economic, and social history. More precisely, I am interested in how West Germany became democratic, how agriculture changed as an economic sector, and how rural society perceived and reacted to both developments.

My dissertation’s interventions shift the “success” paradigm of the Federal Republic (Edgar Wolfrum) to the Land level and asks how and why the integration of Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture into a democratic state succeeded. In the Weimar Republic, agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein stood far to the political right, stagnated economically, and was rent by social fissures. During the Third Reich, the National Socialist bureaucracy, such as the Reich Food Estate, and the demands of the war economy temporarily clamped down on unrest and postponed resolving market and modernization problems by waging a war of conquest. Massive propaganda efforts disguised and displaced economic pressures, from home and abroad. The Federal Republic’s handling of agriculture was largely a response to the same issues that had emerged in Weimar, such as mechanization but had been temporarily frozen during the Third Reich. We can thus compare Germany’s two experiments in democracy in regard to agricultural policy, implementation, and response at the Land level.

Scholarly occupation with post-war socioeconomic changes in Schleswig-Holstein dwindled despite the perhaps self-conscious literature from the 1950s drawing attention to Schleswig-Holstein as a “state under development,” one in transition “from yesterday to today,” and as a “transforming region.”

Nevertheless, the first and most important intervention in the historiography of my topic—in
deed, the point of departure—is the work of Uwe Danker, particularly his recent article that
sketches the outlines of the enormous transformation of agriculture and heavy industry in
Schleswig-Holstein in the Federal Republic. He argued that, for all the obvious differences
between these two sectors, each underwent comparable transformations based on the concept of
structural change. However, no comprehensive historical analysis of the structural changes in
Schleswig-Holstein’s economy and social consequences resulting from this transformation has
been conducted. Of course, my project does not propose to fill this lacuna on its own, but I aim
to make an important contribution by addressing the issue of agriculture, one of the fundamental
branches of the local economy.

One source of inspiration for this dissertation was two or three books I read as an
undergraduate that, although primarily interested in explaining the rise of the National Socialism
political phenomenon, did not neglect economics or society. These books are classics in the
historiography of National Socialism: Rudolf Heberle’s *Landbevölkerung und
Nationalsozialismus* and William Sheridan Allen’s study of Northeim. Both adopted a cross-
disciplinary approach that spawned an industry of scholarship uncovering the social origins of
National Socialism at the local level. Although not the first of their kind, these books
investigated the complex relationship between political allegiance and the environment of voters,

32 Danker, “Landwirtschaft.”

33 Rudolf Heberle, *Landbevölkerung und Nationalsozialismus. Eine soziologische Untersuchung der politischen
Willensbildung in Schleswig-Holstein 1918 bis 1932* (Stuttgart, 1963 [1934]). Another key work is Gerhard
Stoltenberg’s *History of the same area and time period*.


35 Consider Johnpeter Horst Grill, “Local and Regional Studies on National Socialism: A Review,” *Journal of
Contemporary History* 21 Nr. 2 (April 1986): 253-294; more recently Michael Ruck and Karl Heinrich Pohl (eds),
Regionen im Nationalsozialismus (Bielefeld, 2003).
including the geography, particularities in farm type, and village size to answer the question: “why did democracy fail in rural areas or in small towns?” My dissertation picks up where Heberle ended and asks, among other questions, how democracy managed to take root in a Land with an infamously “Brown” past. The work of Heberle and Allen kindled my interest in regional history, informing my conviction that even large political movements need to be understood at the local level.

The main works for political history I enter into a dialogue with are those by Klaus Kiran Patel, Allan Borup, Timothy Allan Tilton and Heinz Sahner.36 The most important recent scholarship that influences my work is that of Kiran Klaus Patel. He is the authority on German postwar agricultural history, focusing on how German agriculture was integrated into the European Union (EU).

The economic thread of the scholarship to which I intend to contribute includes syntheses of West German agrarian history, regional histories of rural areas comparable to Schleswig-Holstein, and studies on Schleswig-Holstein itself. Ulrich Kluge’s synthesis of the Federal Republic’s agricultural policies focuses on implementation through the Ministry for Food and Agriculture.37 Taking a more traditional, economics-centered approach to agricultural history, Kluge avoids coming down clearly on one side or the other when it comes to characterizing farmers as “subjects” or “objects” of agrarian policy. He stresses that instead of conceptualizing the twentieth century as one of de-agrarianization, we should focus on the changing purpose and


function of the agricultural sector. His views summarized in a more recent article are more critical.\textsuperscript{38} Kluge believes the Adenauer government’s partial insulation of agriculture from the Social Market Economy was a disastrous repetition of Weimar-era policies that put German agriculture on a collision course with the EU. It remains to be seen how a study of Schleswig-Holstein compares with his narrative. Although Kluge’s synthesis is valuable, we need a study at the \textit{Land} level because considerable leeway was granted to each in implementation of agrarian policy.\textsuperscript{39}

Geoff and Olivia Wilson’s \textit{German Agriculture in Transition} updates Kluge’s account.\textsuperscript{40} It also focuses on agriculture at a national level. They argue that the three legacies the Federal Republic inherited in 1949 in agriculture were the small family farm as the essential unit of agriculture, along with a strong ideological commitment to it, and the tradition of protectionism. The authors’ central concern is whether German agricultural policy within a European framework facilitated or hindered integration. My dissertation asks similar questions but at the next level down (the \textit{Land} level). Thus, \textit{German Agriculture in Transition} serves as a useful frame of reference for structural change.

Erich Thiesen’s \textit{It all Began in the Green Kremlin} (\textit{Es begann im grünen Kreml}) is an important reference book.\textsuperscript{41} Thiesen and I both mined \textit{Das Bauernblatt} extensively for our work, but he was primarily interested in writing a general history of agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein,


\textsuperscript{39} Alun Jones, \textit{The New Germany: a Human Geography} (Chichester, 1994).

\textsuperscript{40} Geoff A. Wilson and Olivia J. Wilson, \textit{German Agriculture in Transition. Society, Policies and Environment in a Changing Europe} (Houndmills, 2001).

\textsuperscript{41} Erich Thiesen, \textit{Es begann im grünen Kreml} (Neumünster, 1997).
avoiding an argumentative thrust. His coverage was kaleidoscopic, opening avenues for my deeper research. As the title suggests, he sought to explain the processes by which agricultural policy in Schleswig-Holstein became centralized in the city of Rendsburg.

Thiesen aimed to write the follow-up to Thyge Thyssen’s work, which documented the period from 1945 to 1958. Thyssen, who worked in the Schleswig-Holstein Ministry of Agriculture for decades, wrote an important reference work on agriculture. His descriptions of the administrative evolution of policy-making in Schleswig-Holstein are particularly strong. Thus, my contribution will enter into a constant dialogue with these two key books.42 Both Thyssen and Thiesen were practicing farmers in Schleswig-Holstein and were justifiably proud of the area’s postwar accomplishments. Their narratives are therefore positive and even celebratory. To more closely match the language of most farmers themselves, I aim to tell a story punctuated by more friction and distress. Life may have been “good” overall, but that was only in comparison to the Great Depression, the fractured Weimar years, and the dictatorship thereafter.

Extensive literature on postwar regional history, focusing on agricultural Länder, will support my lateral comparisons to Bavaria, Lower Saxony and North Rhine-Westphalia. Consideration of other Länder will enable me to avoid the pitfall of overestimating Schleswig-Holstein’s uniqueness. The attempt to model structural change according to economic patterns prefigures comparison. In considering these regional histories, I broaden the concept of structural change to mean how largely agricultural or rural areas changed from 1945 through the early 1970s.

42 Thyssen’s own involvement in the processes he describes as well as the chronological proximity (he wrote in 1958) means his work is both a primary and secondary source.
Peter Exner’s in-depth analysis of Westphalian agriculture provides a useful comparison in scope and methodology to my project. He addresses modernization primarily within the contentious debate as to whether National Socialism intentionally brought this about, but his use of Max Weber’s ideas on local power and his detailed analysis of three villages relates more directly to my work. He is particularly compelling in explaining the driving forces behind modernization in the 1950s, including available jobs in towns, declining birth rates, intensification, and mechanization of agriculture, and on the social tensions between native Westphalians and ethnic Germans recently resettled from Eastern Europe. I will test whether the large influx of refugees and expellees in postwar Schleswig-Holstein changed the “politics of notables” by widening the franchise to include the younger generation, women, farm laborers, and refugees shaping communal politics.

Paul Erker’s examination of the period from 1945 to 1953 provides numerous insights on the region where National Socialism was born and where mostly Catholic farmers were more resistant to the National Socialist message than Protestant farmers in northern Schleswig-Holstein, at least initially. Erker is most concerned with the social consequences of postwar hunger and the currency reform on the farmers and working-class. As producers, farmers were able to avoid immediate structural change, but once a new currency was introduced in 1948, they felt threatened by modernization and mechanization. However, Erker argues that in Bavaria, results in communal elections, increasing hunger strikes, and higher voter turnouts did not lead to widespread animosity toward democracy. He notes a strong correlation between economic

---

43 Peter Exner, Ländliche Gesellschaft und Landwirtschaft in Westfalen, 1919-1969 (Paderborn, 1997). Interestingly, Exner’s study was written under the auspices of the Westphalian Institute for Regional History, which has funded the project named “Society in Westphalia. Continuity and Change, 1930-1960,” that is quite similar to the larger project to which I will contribute for Schleswig-Holstein.

improvement and citizens’ acceptance of the liberal-democratic political order. In a later article, Erker makes an important intervention in the historiography of postwar German agriculture by arguing that farmers did not simply react to change or consider themselves threatened by modernization but actively contributed to it. Farmers’ changing way of life did not always entail abrupt uprooting from the countryside to the cities but often an intermediate stage of living in the countryside while commuting to work in cities and towns. Farmers provided a flexible labor force that could return to work in the countryside during economic contractions. I will test whether Paul Erker’s findings for Bavaria hold for Schleswig-Holstein, namely that farmers were neither passive recipients of change nor “losers” in the process of modernization. When changes in local infrastructure (i.e., roads, drainage projects, and electricity) were made, to what extent were farmers asked to participate in committees to bring about transformation?

Andreas Eichmüller, studying Bavaria, has also contributed a model study on socioeconomic transformation in agriculture and rural society. Similar to Exner, he compares different socioeconomic sub-regions, and the main themes he discusses are the effects of changing economic realities on farming lobbies and vice versa, changing methods of production, the disappearance of estates and properties, and the concentration of operations into larger, market-oriented businesses. He investigates the social consequences of the mechanization of agriculture that changed work rhythms, the disappearance of collective ways of life, and the difficulty younger farmers had marrying once they inherited debt-ridden properties. He argues

---


46 Ibid, 331.

that for all the regional differences in agriculture, no area in Germany was immune to the agricultural revolution.

Angelika Hohenstein’s dissertation on farmers’ interest groups in Lower Saxony from 1945 to 1954 will inform my study.\(^{48}\) She is interested in tracking the continuities and ruptures in agricultural lobby groups across the caesura of 1945.

An important collection of essays edited by Daniela Münkel features some of the most important trends in scholarship and debates about postwar German agriculture, discussing agricultural change, social life in villages, cultural issues, and milieu politics.\(^{49}\) This volume marks a departure from classical German Agrargeschichte, which focused heavily on economic history. Instead, it treats the work and lifestyle of farmers holistically. My work will contribute to these ongoing debates. For example, Josef Mooser argued that farmers were “a special category of workers in public service” to highlight the change in farmers’ self-perception from those who fed the German people to a small group dependent on government support.\(^{50}\) It remains to be seen whether Mooser’s generalization applies to livestock farmers in Schleswig-Holstein, who had traditionally enjoyed a lucrative business and were proudly less dependent on subsidies. Other issues raised include whether farmers were powerless victims of the modernization process, and the nature and extent of National Socialist intrusions into the socioeconomic conditions shaping the farmers’ way of life. The chapters by Wolfram Pyta and Frank Bösch on the debate about the discontinuity/continuity regarding the farming milieu in the face of National


\(^{49}\) Daniela Münkel (ed.), Der lange Abschied vom Agrarland: Agrarpolitik, Landwirtschaft und ländliche Gesellschaft zwischen Weimar und Bonn (Göttingen, 2000).

Socialism will inform my work in particular. At issue is whether the social structure and political culture of Schleswig-Holstein from 1945 to 1949 was radically different than in the late Weimar Republic.

Sources

The sources I use to examine changing political culture are derived primarily from the *Bauernblatt*, the newspaper published by the Farmers’ Association (*Bauernverband*). Issued weekly, the first pages were normally devoted to agrarian policy issues of the Federal government, Europe, and the world. Occasionally farmers would submit letters to the editor. There are numerous technical reports on mechanization, specialization, and professionalization. Another main source is the *Archiv für christlich-demokratische Politik* (ACDP) in Bonn. I was able to examine CDU documents pertaining to agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein, including records of agricultural committee meetings, agricultural congresses, speeches, and the correspondence of prominent politicians.

Most relevant sources for the economic aspect of integration were found in the University Library and at the *Zentralbibliothek für Weltwirtschaft*, both in Kiel. Statistical surveys and contemporary articles on modernization can answer questions regarding farmers’ management strategies, patterns of investment, orientation to the market, and profit developments over time. Such data will enable me to understand the mechanism by which agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein transitioned to a more capitalist, commercial economy. I consulted many files from the agriculture ministry for Schleswig-Holstein held in the *Landesarchiv* in Schleswig. Such files enabled me to reconstruct government efforts to modernize the dairy industry, examined in detail in Chapter Four.
Social integration makes use of Alltagsgeschichte to investigate how great political and economic changes in agriculture and rural society were reflected in everyday life. To this end, I use recorded interviews with farmers and memoirs. Although this study generally remains on the Land level, capturing the lived experience of structural change required me to turn to the district (Kreis) level. I rely on interviews conducted by sociologist Norbert Fischer in the Stormarn district outside Hamburg. In the late 1990s he interviewed approximately two dozen farmers. The transcripts of these are held in the district archive of Stormarn. In addition, I make use of numerous sociological studies conducted by agrarian agencies in the Federal Republic.

**Topics**

The chronological narrative that follows focuses on points of friction and contestation in structural change from 1945 through the early 1970s, but a brief survey of the period before 1945 is necessary to understand how Schleswig-Holstein fared under the Third Reich and lay the foundations upon which political and economic change occurred. The dramatic rise of the Land’s population and its composition seemed to augur commensurate change in agriculture’s politics and economics. An examination of the chaotic years from 1945 to 1948 in the next chapter illustrates that democratization and structural change of agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein fell far short of even modest hopes. This chapter will also introduce major actors in the subsequent

51 In particular, the districts Stormarn, Schleswig-Flensburg, and Steinburg-Itzehoe.

story, such as Detlef Struve, who was a key figure in the history of the Farmers’ Association and the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein.

Counting the currency reform and founding of the Federal Republic as a caesura toward “normalcy,” I move on to recount the stabilization of agriculture from 1949 to 1955 in Chapter Three. The issue became less about survival, for both consumers and producers, than about establishing agriculture’s place in the economy and its political power. Important legislation marked the transition from a controlled economy to the Social Market Economy. The partial shielding of agriculture from the free market was put to a short but revealing test in the summer of 1951, when dairy farmers boycotted deliveries to Hanseatic cities that refused to raise milk prices. I analyze the “Milk War” to ascertain a branch of agriculture’s readiness to resolve conflict in a democratic manner. The lessons learned from this conflict informed the passage of the 1955 Agriculture Law. This development marked the end of reconstruction and framed subsequent agrarian policy decisions. For example, it enshrined the principle of the family farm as the basic unit of agriculture, and outlined two standpoints on how best to carry out structural change: either by improving conditions (“Strukturpolitik”) or raising prices (“Preispolitik”).

Chapter Four demonstrates how, by the 1960s, farmers in Schleswig-Holstein and West Germany as a whole bowed to growing pressure to “grow or get out” (“wachsen oder weichen”), as a popular slogan demanded. Economic pressure to mechanize and increase the size of farms was coupled with political maneuvering to elevate the viable family farm to a political principle. The Farmers’ Association framed policy discussions on structural change in terms of the Cold War. That is, comparisons about the “ideal” farm were made with East Germany, Western Europe, and the United States. Agronomists’ reports, farmers’ travels, and youth exchange programs filled the pages of the central newspaper, the Bauernblatt, in which authors wrestled
with the optimal ways to cope with structural change. Subsequent sections of Chapter Four focus on the dairy industry in Schleswig-Holstein, an important branch of agriculture for which detailed documentation for structural change exists. Government planning to improve dairy farming collided with farmers’ own concerns and opinions on how to proceed. I am interested in using dairy farming as a case study to track the evolution of agriculture from small, mixed farms dependent on family labor to large, specialized “industrial” operations. Was there a convergence in this branch with US and Western European farming? It will be important not to lose track of the farmers themselves in this process, particularly how they understood and perceived change, their role in the economy, and identity. Structural change was above all a shift in mentality about the function and purpose of agriculture.

This idea leads to the final substantive chapter, which centers on the late 1960s—crisis years of a very different character from those of the late 1940s. The central tenet of agrarian policy—sustaining the family farm—came under increasing pressure as European integration loomed. Difficult to answer questions of prices surfaced. Agro-commissar Sicco Mansholt’s December 1969 visit to Kiel was an important test for how farmers would react to a diametrically opposed policy that called for accelerated de-agrarianization. The question revolved around the nature of agriculture’s integration in the state and European Union. Could family farms be allowed to go on with “business as usual”? Farmers’ protests in 1968 and 1969 also bear comparison to student movements and wider trends in democratization. The late 1960s also witnessed a “changing of the guard” in terms of leading figures in agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein. Farmers’ Association Struve and President of the Agriculture Chamber Peter Jensen retired in 1968. The new generation of leaders had a different attitude about structural change.
I conclude my dissertation by returning to the “human face” of structural change, examining how farms in each of the three regions might have looked in the late 1960s. This assessment will illustrate the dimension of change wrought by the preceding twenty years and provide a concrete basis for me to return to my fundamental questions and thesis.
1. Schleswig-Holstein’s Agriculture 1933-1948

1.1 Introduction

The stunning speed and comprehensiveness of agricultural structural change in Schleswig-Holstein after 1945 was a direct result of the Second World War. Agriculture was forced to change due mostly to tremendous social upheaval, that is, the influx of refugees and evacuees in 1944-45. Considering how agriculture fared during the Third Reich will reveal structural change in sharper relief. How did the regime prepare agriculture to deal with rapid change?

This chapter aims to introduce important institutions and practices, draw attention to continuities and ruptures in agrarian policies, and gauge to what extent the twelve years of National Socialism were sobering for farmers in Schleswig-Holstein. For all the major differences between political regimes (the Weimar Republic, Third Reich, and early years of occupation), remarkable consistency and continuity prevailed in agricultural structures and even some policies. This consistency bred persistent attitudes among farmers regarding politics, economics, and the role of the government. The National Socialists first courted farmers’ support during the “seizure of power,” then tried to Nazify certain aspects of agriculture, such as property ownership and inheritance, and finally used coercive measures to exploit agriculture for the war effort. The Third Reich attempted to steer agriculture, but social dislocation following the lost war soon overrode the regime’s initiatives.
In 1945, the Allies inherited a system of organizing the production, collection, and distribution of food devised by the National Socialists. How the Soviets, Americans, French, and British dealt with existing frameworks varied. In the British zone, which included Schleswig-Holstein, the accent was on continuity in structure and function. Thus, summarizing agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein during the Third Reich makes sense before explaining both long-term continuities and eventual structural change.

Although national and local agrarian policies are well researched for the period up to 1939, fewer scholars have investigated the Second World War period.¹ This is also true at the Land or Gau level.² Some of the best scholarship on Schleswig-Holstein documented the collapse of democracy and the rise of National Socialism from 1918 to 1933.³ Farming was treated in some depth, given agriculture’s prominent place in the economy and its instrumental role in the breakthrough of the National Socialist movement. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the 1939-1945 period.⁴ Archival sources on agriculture during these war years are patchy and scattered. We know the earlier half of the story much better than the latter half. The regime’s propaganda, norms and expectations are well understood, but farmers’ beliefs and behaviors are mysterious. The best study for Schleswig-Holstein is a dated article by Klaus-J.

---

¹ John Farquharson, The Plow and the Swastika (London, 1976), Gustavo Corni, Hitler and the Peasants: Agrarian Policy of the Third Reich trans. David Kerr (New York, 1990). Both focus on the period before 1939. See also Gustavo Corni and Horst Gies, Brot, Butter, Kanonen. Die Ernährungswirtschaft in Deutschland unter der Diktatur Hitlers (Berlin, 1997). It is interesting to note that most scholars working on this area are non-Germans.

² The German Land (pl. Länder) is roughly synonymous with a US state; the National Socialists renamed these administrative units with the more Germanic Gau (plural Gaue).

³ Rietzler, Heberle, Tilton, Stoltenberg, Le Mouvement Paysan

⁴ A notable exception and very fine work is Daniela Münkel, Nationalsozialistische Agrarpolitik und Bauernalltag (Frankfurt, 1996). Münkel’s study examines a Lower Saxon region bordering Schleswig-Holstein.
Thus, we must rely in part on the roughly analogous agriculture in neighboring Lower Saxony to sketch farming’s experience of the war and supplement village histories in Schleswig-Holstein.

1.2 Agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein 1933-39: The “Golden Years” of the Third Reich?

For the sake of clarity, I will divide the 1933-1945 period of agriculture in Germany into two phases: 1933-39 and 1939-1945. The dominant narrative is the gradual trend away from celebratory ideology (e.g., the regime’s promise to elevate agriculture to the “first estate”) toward the subjugation of agriculture to the higher priority of maximizing production for the war effort. For the first phase, I will discuss how the National Socialists consolidated power by “coordinating” agriculture through institutional means. During this period, the Party accented ideology although production was always important. After 1936, agriculture was incorporated into the Four Year Plan, marking the starting point for agriculture’s subordination to the regime’s military agenda. I will analyze how the National Socialists intervened in inheritance and indebtedness during the 1933-39 period to prepare agriculture to better meet the regime’s needs. Whereas the National Socialists mostly used propaganda before 1939 to exhort farmers to produce as much as possible, once the war began, exhortation gave way to surveillance, control, and repression. For the 1939-1945 period, I will discuss production and labor in Schleswig-Holstein and attempt to illuminate everyday life. The point is to understand the mental/political

---


6 Daniela Münkel, Nationalsozialistische Agrarpolitik und Bauernalltag (Frankfurt, 1996).
and productive/economic context in which farmers operated. How was agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein poised to meet the postwar challenges?

The tactical importance of the peasantry for National Socialist electoral success leading to the “seizure of power” in 1933, particularly in Schleswig-Holstein, is a well-known story. With the National Socialists in power, many farmers in Schleswig-Holstein must have thought the National Socialists “owed them.” The Grevenkop farmer Heinrich Ehlers (1863-1940) repeatedly wrote “Germany arise” (Deutschland erwache!) in his diary for January 1933 and hoped for a better future.7

Nevertheless, the National Socialists used their mandate to “coordinate” agriculture with the same speed (if not brutality) as labor unions. In Schleswig-Holstein they sacked many prominent officials, such as Thyge Thyssen, head of the dissolved agriculture chamber (Kammerdirektor).8 An “Old Fighter” or veteran of the movement who joined the Party in its early days, Wilhelm Struve9 was appointed Landesbauernführer, the head of a complex system of supervision and control that emerged to regulate all aspects of food production, collection, and distribution. The most important institution in charge of these issues, the Reich Food Estate (Reichsnährstand or RNS), was established in September 1933 and was not formally abolished until January 1948. Its national headquarters in Berlin determined delivery targets for various parts of the country. These targets were passed along to the regional offices

---


8 Lorenzen-Schmidt, “Landwirtschaftspolitik,” 283. Thyssen, as we shall see, returned to work for the chamber once it was resurrected after World War II.

9 Wilhelm Struve was born in 1901 and thus belonged to the “superfluous” generation (überflüssige Generation), along with Heinrich Himmler and Martin Bormann, who just barely missed active service in WWI and were the core of the National Socialist movement. The term was coined by Detlev Peukert.
(Landesbauernschaften), which in turn set quotas for their administrative areas. Underneath these were district offices (Kreisbauernschaften), where demands received from the regional office were in turn passed to the lowest level of administration, the village office (Ortsbauernschaften). Local officials, working as volunteers, decided how much each farmer had to deliver.

The RNS was supposed to fulfill multiple purposes including maximizing production by vertically organizing production, processing, and distribution and representing farmers’ professional interests. With 16 million members, it was one of the largest National Socialist institutions. However, it was not necessarily ponderous and ineffective. John E. Farquharson noted that “despite the air of rigidity the operational practice was flexible so far as local or regional soil and climatic variations were taken into account when stipulating required deliveries.”

An important precedent was set: at the lowest level, production and compliance hinged on the relationship between individual farmers and local, non-salaried officials, who had often been their professional colleagues before the NSDAP came to power. External control, be it National Socialist or later Allied was filtered, modified, and even softened at the grassroots level. It would be simplistic to argue that the RNS was imposed on farmers. In fact, as Daniela Münkel writes, it “represented the fulfillment of long held demands of traditional farming groups

10 During the Weimar Republic Schleswig-Holstein was a Prussian Provinz, during the Third Reich, it was a Gau, and after 1945, it was a Land.


12 For an interesting postwar case, see Hannoversche Neueste Nachrichten, November 2, 1946, where an attempt to install an outside trustee on a badly run farm near Helmstedt foundered. Not only the property owner but the entire parish council would not countenance the action, threatening to resign en bloc. The parish councilor’s reaction—“We don't want any outsiders (fremde Bauern) here”—reveals much about why official plans could not be enforced.
for a comprehensive representative organization.”¹³ This demand was for a corporate (*ständisch*)
organization uniting all levels of food production, processing, and distribution. At the end of the
Weimar Republic, the government intervened in numerous ways, such as the “Eastern Help”
(*Osthilfe*) scheme to prop up ailing East Elbian estates.¹⁴ If anything, in the early Third Reich
farmers wanted more government intervention.

The regime’s most important agrarian policy innovations were market controls
(*Marktordnung*), new inheritance laws, and debt restructuring. Market regulation was most
important during the early years. Price fixing and boosting domestic production freed the
country’s foreign currency reserves to purchase raw materials for rearmament. One of the “farm
commandments” published in December 1934 called on farmers to practice mixed agriculture
(*vielseitig*),¹⁵ which helps explain the “multivalent independent *Bauernhof*”¹⁶ we encountered in
the Prologue. After all, one of the main causes of the crisis in agriculture in the Weimar Republic
was that one-sided, heavily specialized production rendered farms vulnerable to market
fluctuations. In the late 1920s and 1930s, most farmers reacted to falling commodity prices by
increasing production instead of lowering costs. This strategy was consistent with the new
regime’s wishes. It relied mostly on propaganda, instead of subsidies, to proclaim “battles for
production” (*Erzeugerschlachten*) to entice farmers to produce more than before. According to
*Reichsbauernführer* Richard Walther Darré, the mastermind of the RNS, “A farmer must always
consider his activity as a duty toward his family and people, and never simply an economic

---

¹³ Münkel, Nationalsozialistische Agrarpolitik und Bauernalltag, 105.


¹⁵ Münkel, NS Agrarpolitik, 110.

¹⁶ Corni, Hitler and the Peasants, 158.
venture from which he can earn money.”

Some aspects of the “battle for production” that were repeated during the occupation period 1945-48 were the exhortations to limit livestock husbandry, an important branch of agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein, and boost root crop (Hackfrucht) cultivation. The regime used limited financial means to steer production. For example, it limited the mortgage rate to 4.5 percent in June 1933, and advanced credits to build silos, drainage, and workers’ housing.

The National Socialists hoped to use Marktordnung to shield farmers from the free market, but fixing prices had to balance the interests of consumers against producers, allowing contradictions to emerge. In an agricultural weekly for Schleswig-Holstein in 1933, the motto was to “make everything under the plow profitable.” At the highest level, officials such as Darré underscored farmers’ responsibility to the state and Volk; at the Gau level, farmers were urged to prioritize economic return.

The government permitted food producers to keep percentages of commodities they produced for their families and hired laborers. Some allowance to retain seed and wastage existed, but everything else had to be surrendered to the RNS office at fixed prices. Livestock sales could only be transacted through licensed dealers and were recorded in triplicate, which was significant because it would interdict the irritating (from the Party’s perspective) tendency of farmers to stay in business with Jewish cattle dealers, butchers, and veterinarians, in Lower Saxony, Hesse, Bavaria, and other areas. State control over agriculture was facilitated in 1936

---

17 Cited by Corni, Hitler and the Peasants (1990), 158.
20 Ian Kershaw. Hitler, the Germans, and the Final Solution (Jerusalem/New Haven/London, 2008), 162, from a collection of previously published articles; Münkel, Nationalsozialistische Agrarpolitik, 351-55. The authors are
by the introduction of identity cards (Hofkarte) for all farm holdings over 5 hectares. Penalties for transgressions ranged on a five-point scale from warnings and small fines to placing trustees to supervise farms or even, in rare instances, compulsory leasing.  

Two frequently analyzed topics of National Socialist agrarian policy during the lead up to the war are the Reich Inheritance Law (Reicherbhofgesetz) and Debt Restructuring (Entschuldung). According to Hermann Göring, the inheritance law was designed to prevent “debt-ridden (Überschuldung) properties from being parceled off (Zersplitterung) during the inheritance process.” The relevance of these topics for my research is that the first measure supported idealized “family farms,” which became a cornerstone in the Federal Republic’s agrarian policy, and attempted to cushion them against market forces. Thus, the inheritance law forbade certain farms from being mortgaged or alienated (res extra commercium).

Only owners of these farms were allowed to call themselves “peasants” (Bauern). National Socialists wished to shake the term’s negative connotation and create an elite. They did so by linking Bauer with racial criteria. Large estate owners, such as the Junkers, and smallholders were merely Landwirte—literally, those who tend land. Only approximately 35 percent of farms in Germany in 1933 or approximately 600,000 medium sized farms averaging hard pressed to confidently determine whether continued interactions occurred out of loyalty or purely commercial motives.

21 John E. Farquharson, The Western Allies and the Politics of Food (Leamington Spa, 1985), 15. The RNS collection apparatus, now backed by the military government, found an enthusiastic proponent in Hans Schlange-Schöningen. He recommended this procedure to all regional areas (Landesbauernschaften). That is, occupation officers and German district agriculture agents would inspect farms that failed to meet quotas. The RNS district office would decide on punishment.

22 Entschuldung means debt cancellation, but this was rarely the case. Debt was reduced and payment schedules were extended but farmers’ debts were very rarely excused entirely.

23 Cited by Münkel, Nationalsozialistische Agrarpolitik, 112.

24 The owner could only make use of his net revenue in economic activities, and only on this basis could debts be contracted; Corni, Hitler and the Peasants, 144.
30 acres fell within this law’s provenance. Its regional distribution varied: “the density of this new kind of holding was obviously greater in regions where a law on undivided inheritance was already in force.” Schleswig-Holstein was just such a region. There were approximately 30,000 inherited farms comprising 45 percent of all farms, by far the greatest of any Gau in Germany.

Elsewhere, registration for the hereditary farm was optional. Farms had to be between 7.5 ha, the smallest farm that could sustain the average family, and 125 hectares. The legislation was a double-edged sword: it excused farms from the possibility of forcible auction, foreclosures, and evictions (Zwangsversteigerung), which, in Schleswig-Holstein’s case, was one of the prime forces driving the rural protest movement of the late 1920s. However, the law also prevented farmers from obtaining credit, which made it more difficult to modernize their operations.

The law found vociferous opposition among academics, bankers, creditors and farmers. Max Sering, “doyen of German agronomists,” noted that an elitist and preferential hereditary policy went against centuries of tradition in the peasant economy, which sought to meet the needs of the extended family. Sering died in ignominy in November 1939, and his point of view is important to consider because he represented the conservative, pro-farmer sentiment that was silenced during the Third Reich, but would remerge after the war. The law was also unpopular among ordinary farmers. Farmers were displeased that they were no longer owners with

25 David Schoenbaum, Hitler’s Social Revolution. Class and Status in Nazi Germany 1933-1939 (Garden City/NY, 1966), 164; Grunberger, The 12-Year Reich, 156.
26 Corni, Hitler and the Peasants, 148.
27 Grundmann, Agrarpolitik, 68 table 3.
29 Corni, Hitler and the Peasants, 146. Darré was particularly embarrassed by this open criticism because Sering had international esteem. The minister engineered his downfall with Hitler’s support.
30 For Mecklenburg, Hanover, and Baden, see Corni, Hitler and the Peasants, 154n.27; for Bavaria, Kershaw, Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1983), 43-44.
complete independence on how to run their farms; they were merely managers (*Verwalter*). Mere farmers (*Landwirte*) tilled the soil primarily for economic return; the esteemed peasant (*Bauer*) had definite responsibility to the “people” (*Volk*). At least, that was how the regime put it. But for farmers, the onus of responsibility was not balanced with economic incentive (i.e., the difficulty of obtaining credit). Farms were to pass intact from father to eldest son, thus discriminating against younger sons in parts of Germany where partible inheritance prevailed (the South and West). The law was unfavorable to women, whose petition to inherit was only recognized in 1943, and the older generation, who consequently delayed retiring as long as possible. Approximately 10 percent of entailed estate owners were exempt from the prohibitions on the sale, division, mortgaging, or renting of their land.31

It is difficult to come to a firm conclusion about how this law affected farmers’ attitudes toward the regime. According to one scholar, “Despite the opposition of the rural population, the *Erbhof* law was accepted in the region [Schleswig-Holstein], thanks primarily to the fact that it was enforced in reasonable ways.”32 Friedrich Grundmann stated that the regime was prepared to grant many exceptions and concessions in regions where primogeniture prevailed, whereas it took a hard line in areas where partible inheritance was practiced.33 As a result, farmers were relatively loyal in a *Gau* such as Schleswig-Holstein but most upset in parts of Austria after the *Anschluss*. In his estimation, the law failed to lift agriculture out of the forces of the market

31 Grunberger, The 12-Year Reich, 163.


economy and did little to reverse structural change, such as rural “flight from the land.”\textsuperscript{34}

According to Gustavo Corni:

The enormous work involved in the legislative and judicial revision of the \textit{Erbhof} law clearly shows how German farmers resisted Darré’s project for static, immutable, subsistence economy. It can be said, therefore, that the project of the Minister and theoretician of \textit{Blut und Boden}, whose utopian vision was very far from the concrete real-life needs of the peasant economy, was a failure.\textsuperscript{35}

The regime, over time, was forced to retreat from its ideology of “blood and soil” and had to admit that the “best” farmer was the most economically savvy. To the extent that the legislation affected farmers, it alienated many of them from the regime. Certainly, after the war began, with so many farmers being called to the front, they were outraged that their wives or daughters could not stand to inherit.\textsuperscript{36} Women bore more than their fair share of work on the farm; it was manifestly unjust to not recognize their legal standing accordingly. The “economization” of farmers, defining their role in economic terms, would continue in the postwar period.

Debt was a perennial problem in German agriculture in the twentieth century. After the currency stabilization following the runaway inflation of 1923, debt soon reared its head. This was due to many factors, including taxes, wage and insurance increases, high interest rates, and changing consumption patterns that necessitated new investments.\textsuperscript{37} In Schleswig-Holstein, it had been one of the factors motivating the Rural People’s Movement. In June 1933, Alfred Hugenberg, agriculture minister, proposed lowering indebtedness to a minimum safety level

\textsuperscript{34} Grundmann, \textit{Agrarpolitik im “Dritten Reich.”}, 151.

\textsuperscript{35} Corni, Hitler and the Peasants, 152.

\textsuperscript{36} Grundmann, \textit{Agrarpolitik}, 140-41.

\textsuperscript{37} Grundberger, \textit{The 12-Year Reich}, 151. Taxes increased 2.5-3 times from the pre-war level to the eve of the Depression; Wunderlich, \textit{Farm Labor in Germany}, 41.
Mündelsicherheit) pegged at two-thirds of property value. Farmers’ representatives and civil servants were tasked with implementing the bill, which was Hugenberg’s nod to farmers’ cherished tradition of self-administration (Selbstverwaltung). Nonetheless, Richard Walther Darré, grousing that he did not get Hugenberg’s job during the “seizure of power,” inveighed against the proposal, attacking the interest rates farmers had to pay for debt relief. Surprisingly, the conservative Hugenberg got his way, and the bill passed with the original interest rate of 4.5 percent. The cost of mechanization was partly the cause of rising indebtedness. The number of tractors in Schleswig-Holstein increased markedly from 179 in 1925 to 2,039 in 1939. Although we do not have figures, the rate of increase most likely tapered off considerably during the war. Debt reared its head again in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

1.3 Agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein 1939-1945: War and Defeat

Due to scattered and partially destroyed sources, reconstructing the history of agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein during World War II is difficult. Numerous studies of agricultural Gaue during the Third Reich exist, but the region that bears most similarity to Schleswig-Holstein was Lower Saxony. It bordered Schleswig-Holstein to the south and featured both similar geographical features, such as moor and marshes, and similar types of farming, such as livestock husbandry. Small- and middle-sized plots predominated. Both regions were key suppliers for

38 Corni, Hitler and the Peasants, 46.
Hamburg. The population was overwhelmingly Protestant, and the farming community joined the anti-Weimar Peasants’ Movement of the late 1920s. Finally, as in Schleswig-Holstein, farmers were a key constituency of the NSDAP. Thus, we can make careful comparisons between Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony. Daniela Münkel’s scholarship is key in this regard, but even her study on the Lower Saxon district of Stade, across the Elbe river south of Schleswig-Holstein, devotes comparatively few pages to the war itself.41 Münkel stresses that between the poles of “blood and soil” ideology and pragmatic concerns for maximizing production, the implementation of National Socialist agrarian policy in Stade leaned more heavily toward the latter. The construction of dikes and levies, such as the “Adolf-Hitler Koog”, on the North Sea coast, served both ideological and economic interests in Schleswig-Holstein.42

Unfortunately local village histories (Ortschroniken), although prodigious in number, are of limited use for reconstructing the history of agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein from 1933 to 1945.43 They are typically written by antiquarians, often financed by the village itself, and recount the village’s history from its origin, often in the Middle Ages, to the present. Although exceptions occur, the discussions of the Third Reich are usually formulaic (i.e., “and then the National Socialists came to power”) and rarely discuss agriculture in terms of structural changes. Because the publication of such books was often funded by the community itself, it is understandable that the coverage of the Third Reich was superficial. Dirk Thomaschke studied

41 Nationalsozialistische Agrarpolitik und Bauernalltag (Frankfurt, 1996), 372-423.


the plethora of village chronicles that emerged in the 1980s covering the North Friesian area. He analyzes typical characteristics of village chronicles, such as the formulaic way in which the National Socialists are introduced (i.e., “and then Hitler came to power. Many things changed”) and the besetting sin of the German language: the prevalence of passive voice. A local study is supposed to bring to light the actions of “ordinary” people, but for the period of the Third Reich, the actions, not the people, are emphasized.

Martin Broszat’s pioneering “Bavaria study” shed much light on popular attitudes, toward the regime, including those of farmers, but there are too many differences between this region and northern Germany for comparisons to be made. Bavaria was Catholic, with more Jews in the countryside than in Protestant northern Germany. Farmers in Bavaria were reluctant to cut ties with their Jewish colleagues, while there are few reported instances of such reluctance in Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony. There are scattered reports compiled by the underground Social Democratic party.

Gustavo Corni and Horst Gies offer a salutary reminder that the farming population during the war was largely comprised of women, teenagers, older men, and foreign workers. Given this demographic and the demands of farm work, which made cooperation essential, Ian Kershaw’s finding that farmers in a small Bavarian village had not the slightest interest in

---


46 Deutschland-Berichte der Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Frankfurt, 1982).

ideology or race questions after Barbarossa comes as no surprise.\textsuperscript{48} It is not my primary purpose to fact-check these interviews but rather to suggest that these interactions marked the beginning of structural change in the countryside, and that at least at this stage, change was primarily a social project of integration. The German war effort allowed only erratic agricultural structural change and modernization begun in the Weimar Republic. As we have seen, legislation made it hard for farmers to obtain credit while coercing new types of crop cultivation for the war effort, such as flax. German agriculture remained labor intensive. In prewar Germany, agriculture employed 7 people per acre, whereas France used 5.25 and Britain just 2.5.\textsuperscript{49} The sudden loss of this labor pool had a dramatic effect on both German agricultural production and rural attitudes.

Although evidence is only anecdotal, it seems that farmers in Schleswig-Holstein, similar to their colleagues in Bavaria and other parts of Germany, had been among the first to jump on the National Socialist bandwagon in the 1920s and 1930s, but they were also among the first to jump off.\textsuperscript{50} In 1933, farmers accounted for 13 percent of new NSDAP members. By 1937 this proportion had dropped to 8 percent.\textsuperscript{51} What did farmers grumble about? The farmer Heinrich Ehlers, living in the Krempermarsch, confided in his diary in 1937 that horses were very expensive (a result of high military demand due to rearmament), that prices for produce were below those in the years 1910-13, and that pig farming had collapsed in the marshes.\textsuperscript{52} Farmers

\textsuperscript{48} Ian Kershaw, \textit{Popular Opinion}, 290.

\textsuperscript{49} John E. Farquharson, \textit{The Western Allies}, 55.

\textsuperscript{50} See Kershaw, \textit{Popular Opinion}, 45. An important proviso: most farmers kept their grumbling restricted to economic, not political matters, which explains why the National Socialists turned a blind eye to their commentary. Münkel attested that most disagreements farmers had with the regime were economic; Daniela Münkel, “NS-Agrarpolitik vor Ort. Das Fallbeispiel Niedersachsen 1933-1945,” \textit{Jahrbuch für Geschichte des ländlichen Raumes} 2 (2005): 38-45, here 44.


more typically recorded their serious misgivings with the regime at a late hour. Magdalene Gravert (1895-1986) from Grevenkop kept a meticulous diary from 1921 to 1980. Only around the Battle of Stalingrad did she note increasing disapproval of the regime among farmers.

A nagging war-time problem the regime was never fully able to solve was the “fat gap” (Fettlücke) for consumers. After 1940, for every extra liter of milk and pound of butter farmers produced above quota, they received 2 Pfennige. They were expected to turn over full-fat milk to the authorities and content themselves with skim milk, a prospect for which they had little enthusiasm. In addition, rapeseed oil and sugar beets were extensively cultivated in Schleswig-Holstein in an effort to close the “fat gap” and find an alternative sugar source. From 1932 to 1942, harvests of these crops increased by 150 percent. Planting of flax, important for clothing production, was expanded by more than 500 percent in Schleswig-Holstein during the Third Reich, although the province was deemed unsuitable for its cultivation. The demands of the war forced structural adjustment in Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture in unforeseen ways. Meanwhile, the price scissors—the differential between the prices farmers received for their produce compared to what they needed to purchase other consumer goods—continued to open. In 1941, “industrial goods cost the farmer a fifth more than before the war.”

Air attacks led to considerable dislocation in transportation networks and undermined farmers’ morale in meeting delivery quotas. There were reports of derelictions of duty in Schleswig-Holstein in August 1944. Meanwhile, as the German armies advanced through

---

53 This is found in the Kreisarchiv Steinburg-Itzehoe. My warmest thanks to its staff for permission to read this.

54 Klaus-J. Lorenzen-Schmidt, „Landwirtschaftspolitik und landwirtschaftliche Entwicklung,“ 297.

55 Grunberger, The 12-Year Reich, 164. As we shall see, the “price scissors” remained a problem in post-war West Germany.

Europe, some captured soldiers and foreign civilians conscripted for forced labor were sent to work on farms and industries in Schleswig-Holstein. In late May 1943, agriculture alone used 700,000 POWs and 1.5 million foreign workers, although only 1.75 million German farmers had been conscripted.\footnote{Farquharson, \textit{The Plow and the Swastika}, 235. This figure is for all of Germany. The much larger number of farm hands replacing Germans is indirect proof that mechanization and modernization slowed significantly.} The district archive in Stormarn near Hamburg holds a valuable collection of transcribed interviews with farmers from the area. These offer a glimpse into daily contact between farmers in Schleswig-Holstein and their unwilling guests. Lisa G., interviewed in 1996, discussed how Polish, French, and Russian POWs assisted on her parents’ farm of 45 hectares.\footnote{Kreisarchiv Stormarn S 100 Nr. 18, interview with Lisa G. in Trittau September 18, 1996. My warm thanks to the archivists Herr Watzlawzik and Frau Gaede for making these transcriptions available to me. The interview project of Stormarn residents was conducted in the late 1990s by the ethnologist Prof. Dr. Norbert Fischer, now lecturer of social history at the University of Hamburg. He normally conducted the interviews himself with one or two assistants. The full names of the interviewees was provided as well as their birth dates, but for my narrative this information is not necessary.} Their labor helped offset the requisition of their four horses for the German war effort. Lisa, then age eighteen, worked with these young men, all in their twenties, and “of course we ate at the same tables” as she recounted later.\footnote{Kreisarchiv Stormarn S 100 Nr. 18, interview with Lisa G. in Trittau September 18, 1996, p.8. The claim that workers from Eastern Europe were generally well-treated on farms was echoed by Ewald S., interviewed January 29, 1998 in Oetjendorf; Kreisarchiv Stormarn S 100 Nr. 118, p.23. Ewald S. was working as a farmer in Lütjensee in 1944 and witnessed for himself the generally fair treatment of civilian slave laborers. Ilse S., a few years older than Lisa G., worked on a farm with her father-in-law and French and Russian POWs in Hammoor and claimed in her interview that POWs were not allowed to eat at the same table as her family. Kreisarchiv Stormarn S 100 Nr. 153, interview with Ilse S., Marianne R., and Martha K. in Hammoor, April 18, 1996, p.3.} She claimed that even during the war, at least the Polish workers were allowed a few weeks off to go home. Most returned to work on the farm “of their own free will” (freiwillig).

Relations were hardly rosy. The invaluable diary written by Magdalena Gravert attests to this fact. On November 2, 1943, a Polish forced laborer was publicly hanged in the
Krempermarsch area for allegedly burning down a farm. In some cases, farmers whipped or used pitchforks to mistreat workers.

Lisa G. thought the repatriation of most foreign workers in 1945 proceeded peacefully in general, but she recalled that at least one farmer had during the war struck POWs with a pitchfork for “sometimes just having a sip of milk” (Bloß weil er mal’n Deckel Milch getrunken hat). As the laborers went home, they “paid the farmer back” by beating him up. A group of women farmers interviewed in 1996 attested to lootings in which Polish forced laborers at war’s end stole radios, slaughtered pigs for themselves, and wrecked buildings. However, one of the interviewees, Annemarie S., admitted that she was a child when the events transpired and was unable to fully understand the commotion. What she remembered clearly was the end of the war: German soldiers in uniform throwing away their weapons and weeping, British tanks rolling through the village, and her mother running outside with a rake and bed sheets, presumably to fashion a white flag of surrender.

Furthermore, deploying foreign laborers affected gender relations. These workers were to be somehow integrated economically but segregated socially. Women farmers had plenty on their hands without meeting this requirement. The war brought new roles and responsibilities, particularly for women. They often kept the account books, supervised POWs’ work, and even

---

60 Kreisarchiv Steinburg-Itzehoe, Erinnerungen Magdalene Gravert. Mrs. Gravert took meticulous notes from 1921 to 1980, recording many things of value for the researcher. My thanks to Klaus-J. Lorenzen-Schmidt for bringing this source to my attention.


62 Kreisarchiv Stormarn S 100 Nr. 18, Interview with Lisa G. in Trittau September 18, 1996, 14-15. The transcribed interviews are written in a conversational form, retaining all the “ums,” “you knows,” and related exclamations.

63 Kreisarchiv Stormarn S 100 Nr. 155/56, Interview with Erika W., Bertha K., Thea B. and Annemarie S., in Reinfeld on 1 April 1996, p. 6.

64 Grunberger, The 12-Year Reich, 165.
ran the farm on their own. Their worked an average of seventy-five to eighty-two hours per
week; in 1939, the Interior Ministry noted the rise in miscarriages among farmers’ wives
resulting from overwork.\textsuperscript{65} The consistent refrain in Majewski’s interviews is that women
worked as mothers for everyone: their returning husbands, who were often ill, wounded or
disoriented; children; and refugees assigned to their home.\textsuperscript{66} The war did not fundamentally alter
gender relations on farms, but it accentuated the wide-ranging duties and responsibilities women
bore. However, women generally received little recognition for their work, as documented in the
pages of \textit{Seite der Landfrau} articles dedicated to women in \textit{Das Bauernblatt}. In an article from
1951, male farmers were scolded for failing to acknowledge women’s contribution and for
jealously keeping control of family finances.\textsuperscript{67} The war did not permanently dismantle
patriarchal ways of running the farm that were often re-asserted after 1945.

The single postwar issue which touched everyone’s lives in Schleswig-Holstein was the
massive influx of refugees.\textsuperscript{68} Structural change in agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein 1945-48 was
primarily social-demographic, not economic. In the hundred years prior to 1945, the population
doubled from 800,000 to 1.6 million. In the period from February to June 1945 alone, the
population soared from 1,645,700 to 2,435,000.\textsuperscript{69} Another large group of people who needed to
be housed and fed were the 1.3 million German POWs held in British camps in Eiderstedt and

\textsuperscript{65} Grunberger, The 12-Year Reich, 160-61.
\textsuperscript{66} Majewski, Landfrauenalltag, 140.
\textsuperscript{67} Bauernblatt 24 March 1951, p. 300.
\textsuperscript{68} Most German sources use the terms \textit{Vertriebenen/Flüchtlingen} interchangeably. For a most recent study analyzing
the British role in managing the refugee crisis in Schleswig-Holstein, consider Francis Graham-Dixon, \textit{The Allied
Occupation of Germany. The Refugee Crisis, Denazification and the Path to Reconstruction} (London/New York,
2013), particularly pp. 126-172.
\textsuperscript{69} Statistischen Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein (ed.), \textit{Beiträge zur historischen Statistik Schleswig-Holsteins} (Kiel,
1967), 10.
East Holstein. From the middle of June 1945, the Germans were exclusively responsible for feeding them.70 The most important dimension of structural change in Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture in the years following World War II was demographic.

The demographic revolution in Schleswig-Holstein actually began during the middle of World War II and intensified at its end. Families living in larger cities subject to Allied air attacks, such as Hamburg and Kiel, which had important naval bases and shipyards, sent their children to rural areas of the Reich for safety. A second, even greater influx, occurred in the closing months of the war, as many Germans fled the advancing Red Army. Many of those evacuated by ship from East Prussia were dropped off in ports in Schleswig-Holstein. Because the countryside escaped bomb damage largely unscathed,71 it was assumed that farms and villages could absorb refugees. They were deposited wherever buildings—old Wehrmacht barracks, grain silos, and tool sheds—were standing. Refugees were not distributed evenly among different farms. Because farms that cultivated grain crops tended to have many buildings for storage and housing, they were assigned more refugees than west coast marsh farms, where livestock was important.72 The British assessed in August 1946 that many of these refugees were “too old, too young or too infirm” to be of much use on farms.73 Despite the British preference to

---

70 Gabriele Stüber, Der Kampf gegen den Hunger 1945-1950. Die Ernährungslage in der britischen Zone Deutschlands, insbesondere in Schleswig-Holstein und Hamburg (Neumünster, 1984), 67. Stüber has written the final word on the food situation in Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg for the 1945-1950 period, with 600 pages of text complemented with dozens of tables, graphs, charts, and primary sources in the appendix. This chapter and the next are indebted to her work.

71 There were exceptions, however. The small town of Bad Oldesloe (near Hamburg) in the district of Stormarn received considerable bomb damage to its train station. See Norbert Fischer, “Not der Nachkriegszeit. Das Hamburger Umland am Beispiel Stormarns,” Hermann Heidrich and Ilka Hillenstedt (eds), Fremdes Zuhause: Flüchtlinge und Vertriebene in Schleswig-Holstein nach 1945 (Neumünster, 2009), 84-91, here 86. Stray bombs and buried shrapnel often killed or injured farmers and their livestock, even years after war’s end.


not house expellees in refugee camps too long for fear of political radicalization, the housing shortage in Schleswig-Holstein was so acute that the British had no choice. This strained British-German relations considerably. Exposure to foreign laborers was a prelude to interaction with other “guests,” unwilling or not, such as refugees and expellees from within the Reich and Eastern Europe. Unlike the forced laborers in World War II, these guests were permanent, whether remaining in Schleswig-Holstein or moving to other parts of the Federal Republic.

The ethnographer Rut Majewski interviewed farm women from the district of Eckernförde in the early 1990s. A total of 18,034 refugees had to be allocated to only 1,823 farms in the district. Some of the first refugees came from Kiel, which was first bombed in the spring of 1942. A major spike in numbers of people crowding into the Gau occurred in the summer of 1943, when Hamburg was firebombed on July 24 and 25. Lisa G. reported how young girls from Hamburg had to be taught the basics of milking, harvesting, and housecleaning.

In 1944 and 1945, most newcomers came from East Prussia, Pomerania, and Silesia, fleeing the Red Army. One interviewee in Majewski’s study recalled:

Then came the refugees (Flüchtlinge), yes, we had them too. From Danzig came woman with two daughters to our farm. How they [managed] to live here in that small place out back – it was the chicken coop. That’s where they had to find shelter. My sister was then still living at home with her four daughters. There was just no room. They [the refugees] were so happy and grateful that they had a place to stay. Those were different times (das waren schon andere Verhältnisse damals).

---


75 Kreisarchiv Stormarn S 100 Nr. 18, interview with Lisa G. in Trittau September 18, 1996, p.3.

As Majewski notes, the interviews tended to pass over acrimony between locals and refugees, much as postwar recollections of foreign laborers on farms. Despite the inconvenience due to cramped quarters, women from Schleswig-Holstein made interesting contacts with people from different parts of Germany from all walks of life. Those forced to live together tried to avoid confrontation by establishing rules for using the kitchen, for example. The eagerness of refugees to help on the farm and around the house went a long way.\(^77\) Awareness of the positive gloss on interactions cautions against interpreting the demographic transformation of Schleswig-Holstein as an unmitigated success. Although he did not elaborate, one delegate from the state legislature recounted that Silesians were less difficult to integrate in agriculture than East Prussians, which was puzzling because most East Prussians were presumably Protestants, like Schleswig-Holsteiners.\(^78\)

There is conflicting evidence from interviews about the level of sympathy or sense of responsibility to help others. In September 1945, Major Close of the British Military Government wrote to the mayor of Kiel:

\begin{quote}
It must be brought home to all the Germans that this is a humanitarian duty towards their own Kith and Kin and that any householder not treating his refugees fairly or concealing or withholding accommodations, will be liable to be evicted and have his house handed over to the refugees.\(^79\)
\end{quote}

The British policy of requisitioning the best housing for their troops and administration certainly soured German-British relations as well. In any case, tensions among the occupiers, indigenous people, and the refugees over the housing issue continued well into 1949.\(^80\) The issue is

\(^77\) Majewski, “Landfrauenalltag,” 204.


\(^80\) Graham-Dixon, \textit{The Allied Occupation}, 171.
important because German *perception* of the occupiers setting a bad example in housing or food policy undermined British legitimacy and moral standing to bring about democracy in their zone.

Conversely, Theodor Steltzer, the first minister president of Schleswig-Holstein, appealed to Christian notions of charity instead of national solidarity in a radio address on March 16, 1946:

>[Each one of us] must assume an attitude toward refugees, ex-soldiers and evacuees which makes clear that we regard their fate as a part of ours. We have to understand that our future is indissolubly linked with resolving the refugee crisis (*Flüchtlingsfrage*). [...] In all questions which affect locals and refugees alike, a person should ask himself how they would feel if fates were reversed.  

An outside observer writing in November 1946 was struck by the level of discord in Schleswig-Holstein between locals and recent settlers. Schleswig-Holsteiners treated them as a “foreign people” (*fremdes Volk*). Indeed, in October 1945, South Schleswig petitioned Field Marshal Montgomery to sever Schleswig from Holstein, using language redolent of the recent National Socialist past to justify the exclusion of refugees on racial grounds!  

The influx of refugees assumed such high proportions that on July 26, 1946 the British Military Government decreed a stop to the flood. Nevertheless, as we shall see in subsequent chapters, efforts to integrate refugees in Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture continued well into the 1950s. The significance of the demographic revolution in Schleswig-Holstein in the 1942-48 period for structural change in agriculture is that farmers could witness for themselves the enormous task of feeding and housing refugees, even for a period of a few years. Shifts in

---


attitude accompanied structural change. Whether Schleswig-Holsteiners liked it or not, farming would have to change fundamentally to meet the new challenges. Although defeat marked 1945, it was not a “zero hour” for agriculture and the population at large in Schleswig-Holstein. The demographic transformation in the Land occurred over a longer period from 1942 to 1948.

The significance of the 1933-1948 period for structural change and democratization in Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture rests on several elements. The regime struggled to pursue a coherent economic policy regarding agricultural change, which would continue in the postwar period. The difference was that one political system was geared for war whereas its successor had to attempt post-war reconstruction. The Third Reich introduced certain institutional frameworks which would exist into the postwar period, i.e., the Reich Food Estate. National Socialism met pressures such as modernization and rural emigration with propaganda before 1939 and increasingly invasive surveillance and intervention once the war began. As a dictatorship, of course, it suspended any democratic tendencies, in agriculture or elsewhere. However, the war, and particularly the demographic revolution, changed the social and political landscape of the Gau completely. From 1945 to 1948, Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture was marked by upheaval and reconstruction. The most pressing consequence of military defeat for agriculture was arguably social: the wholesale demographic change wrought by the influx of refugees and, to a lesser extent, the loss of forced labor. Agriculture and rural society were forced to house, feed, and provide work for many during this period. Local farmers’ reactions to forces of structural-demographic change and the pluralization of society ran the gamut from friendly cohabitation with refugees to bitterness and confrontation. Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture, indeed the region as a whole, was thrown into a crisis where structural change and political realignment were unavoidable, as the next chapter demonstrates.
1.4 Conclusion

In particular, farmers experienced growing governmental intervention in their way of life at the end of the Weimar Republic, through the Third Reich, and into the occupation period. Three more different political regimes could hardly be imagined. Nevertheless, from the point of view of agricultural policy, the theme was consistent: increasing government intervention, quite apart from its effectiveness. This phenomenon would come to deeply influence farmers’ attitudes toward the government’s role in agriculture. As the following chapters illustrate, farmers expected their Land and federal agencies to go to considerable lengths to protect and support their livelihood.
2. Surmounting the Crisis in Agriculture (1945-1948)

2.1 Introduction: Schleswig-Holstein’s Agriculture in 1945

Never before in Schleswig-Holstein’s history, nor in Germany’s history, did agriculture assume such importance as in 1945. The Land’s capacity to quickly produce food sufficient for a swollen population was certainly seen by many as a matter of life and death.\(^1\) In the first issue of the Kieler Kurier on June 4, 1945, Field Marshal Montgomery addressed the German people with a program and request. “My immediate goal is to restore law and order (einfaches und geregeltes Leben) for everyone. Above all we must see to it that the population has (a) food, (b) housing, (c) freedom from illness.”\(^2\) This chapter demonstrates in topical rather than chronological fashion that agriculture in 1945 was mired in crisis and struggled to overcome it while negotiating the transition from the interventionism of the Third Reich in agricultural policy to the similarly interventionist practices of the occupation. Farmers resorted to “self-help,” which basically meant ducking the “system,” as they had done during the Third Reich. For example, one way in which farmers reacted to British intervention was to resist the conversion of pastureland into cropland (Grünlandumbruch). To avoid famine, the British demanded that

---

\(^1\) The first postwar agriculture minister for Schleswig-Holstein, Willi Rickers (CDU), warned of impending “chaos and death” (“uns droht unmittelbar völkischer Tod und Chaos”) in the Landtag in 1946. Cited by Thyssen, Bauer und Standesvertretung (Neumünster, 1958), 428. At the Potsdam Conference in July 1945, the Allies declared that “The focus of economic activity is to be on agriculture and peaceful production,” Ernst Deuerlein (ed.) Potsdam 1945. Quellen zur Konferenz der “Großen Drei” (Munich, 1963), 357.

agriculture be retooled to produce food—particularly grains—as quickly as possible, with profit considerations taking a back seat.³ Traditional areas of livestock farming, such as the western coast, were tasked with adjusting accordingly. Because this change threatened the long-term recovery and maintenance of livestock herds, Schleswig-Holstein’s farmers sought to evade these conversion measures.

A second form of “self-help” was the black market, a fundamental economic reality of the immediate postwar period. The 1948 currency reform was meant to obstruct the black market. Farmers were admonished to acknowledge the needs of consumers and respect “fair” prices. The final economic caesura that affected agriculture most in this transition period was the currency reform and the “Equalization of Burdens” Law (Lastenausgleich).⁴ The dominant narrative holds that in June and July 1948, shop windows were suddenly filled with goods. This section investigates the economic effects the currency reform had on agriculture and whether the Lastenausgleich instilled a sense of responsibility in farmers to do their part in restoring civil society.

The next section examines the reconstruction of agricultural administration, which was meant to accomplish several goals, including creating both an effective and transparent bureaucracy and a democratized civil society. The Farmers’ Association (Bauernverband) was a key organization through which the historian can investigate democratization and structural change in agriculture. Leading figures such as Detlef Struve, who presided over agrarian policymaking and implementation for decades, were instrumental in rebuilding associational life

---

³ This was the Grünländumbruch.

⁴ The purpose of this was to financially assist those who had suffered due to expulsion. See Michael L. Hughes, Shoulderering the Burdens of Defeat. West Germany and the Reconstruction of Social Justice. (Chapel Hill, 1999).
destroyed by the National Socialists and establishing links to political parties. Organizations such as the Farmers’ Association helped restore civil society. It and its publication Das Bauernblatt became the voice of farmers coping with changes in politics, the economy, and society. We introduce the most important organization and publication to the story of structural change in Schleswig-Holstein.

Denazification and land reform are case studies that shed light on democratization. The Landtag debates marked an early attempt by the Social Democratic party (SPD) in power 1947-48 to jump start democratization and resolve the pressing need to settle refugees in one fell swoop. The debate on the subject between the CDU and SPD quickly politicized land reform, cast in the light of the Cold War. The “30,000-hectare Deal” is a case study for the considerable control private landowners still had over attempted land reform. The sanctity of private property went untouched. In the end, the modest program to set aside land for refugees originated in private circles after government efforts reached a standstill.

Turning to the general crisis situation in 1945, Hamburg Senator Friedrich Frank summarized: “The soil is exhausted (ausgepowert), the tools old and broken, there is neither fertilizer nor seed nor appropriate labor!" Secondary sources confirm his assessment. Gabriele Stüber’s dissertation in 1984 depicted the status of Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture in 1945 by examining developments in arable land, harvest yields, livestock population, means of production, and labor. Even allowing for statistical discrepancies, the outlook was bleak. Although the amount of land under cultivation peaked in 1946 due to British intervention,

---


6 Stüber, Der Kampf, 114-133.
harvest yields and livestock herds suffered as the result of depleted fertilizer; worn out machines and tools; an undernourished, underpaid,\textsuperscript{7} and improperly clothed labor force; and restrictive taxation.

Reconstructing the exact production figures for Schleswig-Holstein is nearly impossible. In 1948, agricultural production in western Germany was estimated to have been 30 percent lower in 1946-47 than in 1938-39.\textsuperscript{8} Comparisons in pig, cattle, and milk sales—all very important products in Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture—between 1934-1936 and 1948-1950 (projected) indicated a drop of 40 percent, 25 percent, and 20 percent, respectively. Not only did cattle herds decrease in size, but the fat-content of their milk declined from 1944 to 1948.\textsuperscript{9} Supplies of fertilizer were halved according to a conservative estimate.\textsuperscript{10} Next to fertilizer, the most frequent cause for concern was lack of labor, or, in some cases, that laborers lacked appropriate clothing. The British did what they could. In the summer of 1945, they released 50,000 POWs to help with the harvest in “Operation Barleycorn.” Between June 1, 1945 and

\textsuperscript{7} The average hourly wage for land workers in Schleswig-Holstein in 1949 was 60 Pfennige. This did not increase until 1953. See Statistisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein (ed.), Beiträge zur historischen Statistik Schleswig-Holsteins (Kiel, 1967), 196. Keeping workers’ wages low also gave little incentive for farmers to replace or supplement them with machines.

\textsuperscript{8} Constantin von Dietze, “The State of German Agriculture,” Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences 260 (Nov. 1948), 74-79. Von Dietze was professor at the University of Freiburg, previously at Rostock, Jena, and Berlin. Author of The Situation of Farm Hands in Eastern Germany (1922), The Present Crisis in Agriculture (1930), Applied Agricultural Economics (1936), Farm and Collective (1946). He was the Doktorvater or Erich Thiesen, whose Es Begann im grünen Kreml is an important reference for this dissertation.


\textsuperscript{10} Thyssen, Bauer, 429 claims that there was only 25 percent of the necessary nitrogen, 35 percent of the phosphorus, and 45 percent of the potash fertilizer. Unfortunately, as is often the case in this source, Thyssen does not provide the evidence for his claim. However, as an expert in the agricultural agencies, he would have been in a position to know. Dr. Alex Gloy of the food office (Landesernährungsamt) in Kiel wrote in March 1947 that the single most important factor impeding production was the lack of fertilizer. See Schleswig-Holsteinische Landpost 97 Nr. 6 (15 March 1947), 43.
April 15, 1946, more than a million tons of food were imported into the British zone, but this relief did little to improve domestic agricultural production.11

The imminent food crisis in Schleswig-Holstein could only have loomed larger for residents after the cessation of hostilities on May 9, 1945. Production in the western zones covered only half of demand.12 Hamburg Senator Friedrich Frank gave the reasons listed above why agriculture was unable to provide food sufficient to sustain the population. By war’s end, barely 1,000 daily calories were available per person.13 The massive population increase described in the previous chapter only intensified the pressure to increase agricultural production quickly. The challenge of feeding the increased population was further intensified by the logistical nightmare of registering produce, processing goods, and distributing food.14

The uncertainty regarding currency’s true worth had been a factor hindering agricultural production. Farmers hoarded their commodities, land and machines. In a booklet published in March 1948, Agriculture Commissioner Dr. Hans Schlange-Schöningen claimed that taxation was a further disincentive to production. The total land tax burden (Gesamtsteuerbelastung) had increased from 40 RM/hectare before 1939 to 125 RM/hectare in 1945 and 1946.15


12 Justus Rohrbach, Im Schatten des Hungers. Dokumentarisches zur Ernährungspolitik und Ernährungswirtschaft in den Jahren 1945-1949 (Hamburg, 1955), 25. Labor was limited because slave laborers in Germany were being sent home, and German POWs were still in captivity; machinery old and decrepit; fertilizer was scarce; and the agricultural lands East of the Elbe were lost. The loss of agricultural hinterlands in Mecklenburg particularly affected Lübeck, which depended on this area.

13 The lowest point in available calories was registered in May 1947 with 1,100 calories per person per day. Alois Seidl, Deutsche Agrargeschichte (Frankfurt/M, 2006), 271. As a comparison, in August 1945, approximately 1,280 daily calories were produced for every Normalverbraucher in Schleswig-Holstein. Stüber, Der Kampf, 71.


15 Hans Schlange-Schöningen, Möglichkeiten landwirtschaftlicher Erzeugungssteigerung (Frankfurt/M, March 1948), 21.
In a speech on December 4, 1946 before representatives of agriculture, Agriculture Minister Hans Bundtzen summarized farmers’ challenges:

We stand before the abyss (vor einem Nichts): no machines, no tools, [...] no conveyor belts or straps (Riemen), little fertilizer, [...] no wire, nails, iron, wood, and so on. Our buildings are decrepit. In all areas of agriculture, but especially in livestock herds, our capital assets are threatened (ist die Substanz angegriffen). [...] Our pigpens are practically empty. Cattle herds are declining quickly. Soil exhaustion (Entkräftung) in conjunction with the forcible reorientation (Umbruch) proceeds at dizzying speed. Conscientious farmers face a punitive tax system. The question posed again and again is whether there is any point to farmers’ hard work.16

Nevertheless, Bundtzen admonished farmers to do their best and appealed to the Military Government to do its part by providing farmers with the means to do their work. The underlying assumption was simple. German farmers were capable and hard working, but circumstances prevented them from independently feeding themselves and their fellow citizens. In this instance, they turned to the higher authority, the Allied Military Government. Subsequently, in the 1950s and 1960s, even though the food crisis had abated, German farmers similarly turned to higher authority (in this case, the Federal Government) for help in adjusting to structural change. Thus heavy government intervention had been a mainstay in German agriculture since the Third Reich, and farmers became used to it.

2.2 British-German Interaction, “Self-Help,” and the Currency Reform

The economic chaos of 1945 and the following three years of erratic agricultural development tested relations between occupier and occupied, fostered a morally ambiguous black market, and was finally resolved through the introduction of a stable currency. This confusing situation shunted aside democratization and structural change in agriculture for the time being.

16 Cited by Stüber, Der Kampf, 131.
Schleswig-Holstein was in the British zone of occupation, formally known as the Control Commission for Germany/British Element (CCG/BE) and headquartered in Bad Oeyenhausen (Westphalia). The Food and Agriculture Division (FAD) in Hamburg centralized control over these key areas. The FAD was subdivided into “Branches” and “Groups” throughout Schleswig-Holstein. British officials relied on German administrators and agricultural experts to manage agricultural production, registering produce, and distributing goods. To that end, in the fall of 1945, the German Interregional Food Allocation Committee was set up in Kassel, but the poor harvest of 1945, among other factors, convinced the British to centralize agricultural administration still further under increased executive power through the creation of the Central Food Office (Zentralamt für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft or ZEL), chaired by Schlange-Schöningen. The Office’s duties included ascertaining production and collecting, rationing, and distributing imported and domestic food. Agriculture ministers from various Länder were granted no more authority than permission to attend meetings (Anhörungsrecht). The Central Food Office incorporated the Reich Food Estate largely intact as well as district and county agriculture agencies. British officials generally felt it had operated fairly and efficiently during

---

17 The following relies on Kluge, 40 Jahre Agrarpolitik vol.1, 41. Frank Hollins was the British official in charge of agriculture.

18 At the same time, the British frequently had to call upon civilian and/or retired experts to fill offices in agricultural agencies.

19 During the Weimar Republic, Schlange-Schöningen (1888-1960) was a member of the German National Conservative party (DNVP) and Reich Commissar for Eastern Assistance (Osthilfe), to resuscitate ailing agriculture in East Prussia in the second Brüning cabinet. Schöningen himself had been a large landowner in Pomerania. Find articles on Günter J. Trittel, “Hans Schlange-Schöningen. Ein vergessener Politiker der ‘ersten Stunde,’” Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte 35 (1987): 25-63.
the Third Reich.²⁰ Perhaps they did not realize that if German civilians ate relatively well late into the war, it was largely at the cost of civilians in occupied countries.²¹

Notably, compared to the US zone of occupation, the British accented dirigisme and tended to favor the consumer over the farmer.²² The British had been planning how to administer agriculture in their zone since the summer of 1944 and had trained personnel accordingly. Nevertheless, once in Germany, they were generally understaffed.²³ By assuming responsibility in this way, the British left themselves vulnerable to criticism. Initial positive feelings toward the British occupiers quickly changed to criticism of the military government, as Hamburg’s first postwar mayor, Rudolf Petersen, noted.²⁴

The British soon changed course. In light of increasing tensions between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union, American and British officials fused their zones into one economic unit—a bizone—on January 1, 1947. In the case of agriculture, this change entailed the founding of a bizonal Food and Agriculture Board on September 10, 1946. Hermann Dietrich, special

---

²⁰ Frank Hollins, Deputy Chief of the Food and Agriculture Division of the British Military Government, wrote a memorandum on September 5, 1946 concerning the “Reorganization of the Administration and Agriculture in the British Zone.” The British acknowledged objections for keeping the Reich Food Estate intact, but he asserted that the “leadership principle” (Führerprinzip) was eliminated and that the most outspoken National Socialists had been removed. Hollins saw securing food as a priority. He reasoned that once the situation stabilized, there would be time for a more thorough restructuring. Cited by Christopher Weisz, “Organisation und Ideologie der Landwirtschaft 1945-1949” Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte 21 Nr. 2 (1973), 192-199, here 197n20. The Reich Food Estate was abolished on January 21, 1948. British Directive Nr. 34 governed the rules and guidelines in agricultural production. It envisioned the continued work of the Reich Food Estate while removing dyed-in-the-wool National Socialists. Cited by Stüber, Der Kampf 47-48. See Gesetz zur Auflösung des Reichnährstandes, BA, Z 6/1, folder 35, 1948.

²¹ As noted in Münkel, Nationalsozialistische Agrarpolitik, 127.

²² Christopher Weisz, “Organisation und Ideologie der Landwirtschaft 1945-1949” Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte 21 Nr. 2 (1973), 192-199, here 194. That the British were more oriented toward consumers makes sense considering that they had the Ruhr area to administer. A Labour government was in power, too. Despite Atlee’s landslide victory over Churchill, according to Francis Graham-Dixon “Labour’s foreign policy from 1945 emphasized a willingness to continue with much of the tough and uncompromising post-war policy towards Germany,” The Allied Occupation, 6.

²³ Farquharson, The Western Allies, 34-35.

plenipotentiary for agriculture in the US zone, chaired the board, with Schlange-Schöningen as his deputy.\textsuperscript{25} The new bizonal Food and Agriculture Office (\textit{Verwaltungsrat für Ernährung Landwirtschaft und Forsten} or VELF) brought respective agriculture ministers from Länder together in one body. Its top priority was to eliminate the differential in available food between agricultural and industrial areas in the bizone. It superseded and replaced the ZEL.

Meanwhile, the British moved quickly within their area to entrust administration to local authorities. A milestone in reviving agricultural organizational life was Food and Agriculture Instruction No. 108 from August 1946, in which the British military government tasked the Central Food Office to organize and supervise agricultural administration on its own.\textsuperscript{26} Carrying out Instruction No. 108 entailed dissolving the Reich Food Estate and liquidating its assets of 136 million RM. A law to this effect was passed on January 21, 1948, hailed by Schlange-Schöningen as a “farmers’ freedom law” (\textit{Bauernbefreiungsgesetz}).\textsuperscript{27} Farmers’ organizations were now supposed to send representatives to government agencies and were granted the right to participate in decisions regarding production, price policies, trade, and market regulation. Their inclusion in agrarian policy-making marked an important step away from dirigisme, a legacy of the Third Reich. Instruction No. 108 was consistent with British conceptions of “devolution of power,” in which authority was passed to German officials when the opportunity arose. This strategy saved time and money and deflected criticism away from the British.

Combining British and German administrations aggravated agricultural production and distribution. Amid this friction, motivated German officials explored how democracy should be

\textsuperscript{25} Kluge, 40 Jahre Agrarpolitik vol.1, 46.

\textsuperscript{26} Kluge, 40 Jahre Agrarpolitik vol.1, 51.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid. This was premature on his part: rationing, controls, and price caps were still in effect until the early 1950s. Schlange-Schöningen was perhaps equating the end of National Socialist legislation to the Prussian emancipation edict of 1807.
practiced. In April 1947, the minister for agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein, Dr. Dr. Paul Pagel (CDU),\textsuperscript{28} reported on steps the state government had undertaken in the preceding weeks to remedy the food situation.\textsuperscript{29} This report was motivated by an inquiry in the Landtag lodged by Deputy Otto Pressler of the Communist party (KPD) as to who was to blame for food shortages. Pagel began by mentioning that he was only substituting for Minister Hans Bundtzen, who was ill. Pagel then described the confusion that arose when trying to investigate food shortages and disruptions while staying in regular contact with the British governor. Pagel had to travel back and forth between Kiel and Hamburg to establish how many tons of grain were actually available for the Land and Hanseatic city.\textsuperscript{30} Discrepancies in data apparently existed because the British had higher figures. Pagel called upon his earlier experience as district agriculture director (Kreisbauernvorsteher) in Bad Segeberg, where discrepancies emerged because of the inability of German mills to process corn at the efficiency (Ausmahlungsquote) assumed by the American firms delivering the grain. Pagel also guessed that Allied figures did not factor in a 5 percent loss rate whenever grain was shipped as German agencies were accustomed to do.

In any case, Pagel claimed that the crisis (Zuspitzung der Situation) had been predicted months before by German agencies and their British counterparts, but that the Germans were in no position to affect the import of grain.\textsuperscript{31} Pagel and his subordinates were allegedly the last to

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{28} Pagel had doctorates in agronomy and political science. Born in 1894 in Bredefelde (Mecklenburg), after World War I, he served as county councilor (Landrat) and director of labor office in Greifswald. During the Third Reich, he worked as a freelance agricultural advisor and at IG-Farben Berlin/Wilmersdorf while active in a resistance circle. In 1945, he was one of the founders of the CDU in the district of Bad Segeberg and assumed the post of mayor of Kükels. From the Findbuch in the Archiv für christlich-demokratische Politik (ACDP). I thank Dr. Andreas Grau, who found the relevant documents.
\bibitem{29} Stenographische Niederschrift der 7.Vollsitzung des II. Schleswig-Holsteinischen Landtages Ernährungslage, ACDP 01-287 003/2, Pagel Nachlass.
\bibitem{30} At that time, Kiel and Hamburg were treated as one administrative entity.
\bibitem{31} ACDP 01-287 003/2, Pagel Nachlass, p.4.
\end{thebibliography}
know when and if a freighter docked in Hamburg or whether the thousands of tons of grain in a ship were earmarked for Schleswig-Holstein. Central British offices in Stuttgart made such decisions. Due to last minute strikes by shipyard workers in the United States, grain might not be shipped at all, according to Pagel.

Pagel’s criticism became more pointed. He deemed it intolerable that Bavaria, which was in the US zone of occupation, had sufficient grain and bread to sustain it for three months, whereas officials throughout the British zone had to scramble to ensure that ships would deliver only enough to cover the next week. He pointed out that a special law, “No. 7 for the assumption of agricultural administration,” was then being developed in the state government and declared that German agencies were to assume responsibility for the “production and just distribution” of rations within their jurisdiction. Pagel ended his speech by remarking that it would be easy to find a scapegoat, adding, “whether this is fair is another question.”

A Landtag debate followed Pagel’s address. He then took the podium again, remarking acerbically that it sounded as if the Germans had won the war and were in a position to dictate how much grain or bread they received. He reiterated that it was his “misfortune” to suddenly step in for a sick minister and that he only sought to describe the events of the past weeks. Referencing meetings in Stuttgart (March 6-7, 1947) regarding distributions of food rations, Pagel explained that the organization of the agricultural administration was bad. He criticized lax representatives from Schleswig-Holstein in the council in Stuttgart for meekly accepting planned grain deliveries that would fill only half of the Land’s allocation. He then described the chaos crippling various agricultural ministries. He reported positively that the military

---

32 ACDP 01-287 003/2, Pagel Nachlass, p5. „Wir sind wohl gewillt, die Verantwortung für die gerechte Verteilung für die Erfassung und Produktion zu bestimmen, jedoch nicht für den Teil, den wir nicht bestimmen können.“

33 ACDP 01-287 003/2, Pagel Nachlass, 112/II/6, p.1.
government assented to a change in administration of agrarian questions, so that Schleswig-Holstein’s government might have more authority (*Anweisungsrecht*). He described the meeting in Moscow, where decisions were being made on the occupation structure, including whether a unitary or federal state (*Einheits- oder föderativer Staat*) would be created. Pagel declared that, as far as agricultural and food questions were concerned, he preferred a strict centralized organization (*straffe Zentralleitung*), which prompted a “quite right!” (“*sehr richtig!*”) from Deputy Andreas Gayk (SPD). Conservatives and Social Democrats could agree on certain issues in food administration.

Frustration with Allied interference and restrictions in practicing democracy transcended party lines in Schleswig-Holstein. Both delegates Gayk from the SPD and Carl Schröter from the CDU directed their displeasure at Ordinance No. 57, which strengthened central agencies’ ability to pass legislation at the cost of *Länder* government. In *Landtag* sessions, Gayk complained of democracy by the “teaspoon” (*teelöffelweise*), and Schröter chimed in with “democracy by fiat” (*verordnet*).” Clearly, German officials’ pride was stung. As American historian John Gimbel wrote in 1968, they had to undergo a painful transition from “agent-type leadership” to “natural-type leadership.” That is, German officials began with little scope for independence from the occupiers. Food policy was similar to dealing with refugees. As Francis Graham-Dixon’s recent study on British handling of this crisis in Schleswig-Holstein found, German officials were

---

34 Ibid, p. 5.

35 Wortprotokoll II Landtag, Eröffnungssitzung vom 2.12.1946, p.25 (Gayk) & 31 (Schröter).

frustrated at being told they were responsible for managing the problem without being given sufficient authority.\textsuperscript{37}

To be sure, constructing a democracy was a cultural break, eloquently captured by Harold Ingram's phrase the “export of British democracy” from 1947.\textsuperscript{38} Agricultural production and distribution had long been a central plank of “self-rule” in Schleswig-Holstein. The bewildering array of “special plenipotentiaries” (\textit{Sonderbeauftragter}) who intervened in most day-to-day activities stymied self-governance. Theodor Steltzer wrote in his memoirs that the British did not consider Germans equals or partners in democratization.\textsuperscript{39} The British merely wished to create agencies staffed by Germans who would pass along their orders. For most German politicians at all levels of government in Schleswig-Holstein, too great a gulf was present between a nominal democracy and their tenure of office on the one hand and the actual practice of democracy on the other, severely restricted by the Allies.\textsuperscript{40} Although he was on the far left wing of the SPD, Erich Arp, as agriculture minister, was equally as annoyed as CDU politicians with the Allied-imposed democratization. He pointedly asked in a cabinet meeting on November 2, 1946: “Democracy—is that something you can eat?”\textsuperscript{41} The Allied political mission was at odds with the immediate needs of German civilians.

Some moments came uncomfortably close to violating democratic tenets, such as the right to free speech. For instance, the British felt compelled to prohibit \textit{Landtag} deputies Emmy

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{37} Graham-Dixon, \textit{The Allied Occupation}, 133.
\item \textsuperscript{38} Harold Ingrams, “Building Democracy in Germany,” \textit{The Quarterly Review} 572 (April 1947), 208-222. Ingrams worked in the Control Commission (British Element), from 1945-47.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Steltzer, \textit{Reden}, 188.
\item \textsuperscript{40} Stüber, \textit{Der Kampf}, 186.
\item \textsuperscript{41} Cited by Stüber, \textit{Der Kampf}, 190.
\end{itemize}
Lüthje (CDU) and Max Rohse (KPD) from participating in political activity for six months, starting in late October 1947.\textsuperscript{42} In Lüthje’s case, it was ostensibly because she called for the restoration of the borders from 1937. She claimed that “I will say everything necessary to reduce the affliction (Not) of the German people,” even if this meant going against British measures “which might mean I will be jailed (eingesteckt) and that my daughter will have to cook turnips for herself.”\textsuperscript{43}

The British said that the prohibition:

was the result of our general feeling that Germans of all parties in Schleswig-Holstein are getting increasingly above themselves in their attitudes to Military Government. Indeed, they are far more aggressive than in any of the other Länder and we can only ascribe this phenomena to the uncouth and pugnacious characteristics of the inhabitants which gave the Province the highest percentage of Party members per head of population in Germany.\textsuperscript{44}

The British believed that this “uncouth and pugnacious” characteristic was a part of Schleswig-Holstein’s political culture, quite apart from party affiliation or even gender. Historically, farmers and politicians from the west coast (Dithmarschen) were known to fit this description exactly: stubborn and boorish to the point of rudeness.

Aside from conflict in distributing food, potential conflict on production threatened to erupt between German and British agencies. Producing food as quickly as possible with little concern for profit was the main agricultural policy for the 1945-48 period. Fulfilling the most basic nutritional requirements was the order of the day. This meant, above all, direct consumption of root vegetables (Hackfrucht) such as potatoes. On August 1, 1945, Dr. Alex Gloy from Food Office B (Ernährungsamt) in Kiel declared that continued livestock farming


\textsuperscript{43} Ibid, 175.

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid, 11.
(i.e., pigs and cattle) was simply unsustainable. The extensive pastureland would have to be converted to arable land for potato cultivation. The increase of potato cultivation at the expense of livestock was reverse structural change away from commercialization and back to subsistence farming. That is, instead of relatively lucrative livestock farming, more labor-intensive and less profitable potato cultivation was implemented to maximize calorific output per acre. In effect, consumers were reverting to a diet from the eighteenth century. Göttingen agronomist Professor Friedrich Herman Rein warned the British against robbing the population of important sources of fat and protein, to no avail. Potato cultivation peaked in 1948, meeting British targets. Pig and poultry yields in 1947 fell by 32 percent and 40 percent, respectively, compared to those of 1935. The VELF pushed for restricting livestock herds and emphasized cultivating grains and potatoes for human consumption in an August 1946 meeting, which had important implications at the district level. Eiderstedt, in the marsh area, was a classic area for livestock. Its soil was not particularly suitable for potatoes. Nevertheless, the district increased the land devoted to potatoes from 33 hectares in 1938 to 160 hectares in 1946. British attempts to utilize tree nurseries (Baumschulen) for vegetable cultivation encountered resistance among farmers. Echoing this sentiment, in first issue of the Schleswig-Holsteinische Landpost from October 1946, farmers were told that they would have to increase cultivation of legumes to meet the

45 Bekanntmachungen der Landesbauernschaft from 1.8.1945, 1-2.

46 Stüber, Der Kampf, 128.

47 Stüber, Der Kampf, 121. Farquharson deemed the land conversion scheme a failure for the British Zone as a whole. See The Western Allies, 77.

48 Rohrbach, Im Schatten des Hungers, 320 appendix 19.


50 Stüber, Der Kampf, 121.
protein requirements of the population.\textsuperscript{51} Known throughout Germany as one of the premier beef and pork-producing regions, Schleswig-Holstein was reduced to cultivating modest beans to secure subsistence-level food production. Asparagus, strawberries, and flowers were considered dispensable luxuries.

Considerable resistance and resentment arose toward these outside interventions to alter farming patterns. The Farmers’ Association criticized the fact that, for the first time, Schleswig-Holstein became an exporter rather than importer of potatoes. Peter Jensen declared that the shift to potato cultivation constituted “a new turn which contradicts the mentality and nature of the population” (\textit{Mentalität und der Veranlagung der Bevölkerung widerspricht}).\textsuperscript{52} Farmers and statisticians lied to British supervisors on how much land was under cultivation for fodder to hide the size of herds. German resistance to the land conversion scheme (\textit{Grünlandumbruch}) was merely a continuation of what had occurred during the last stages of the war. The National Socialists might have ordered farmers to cultivate certain crops or, by the end, engage in “scorched earth” policy, but farmers had no intent of complying. The regime also attempted to steer production away from livestock farming to direct consumption staples such as grains and potatoes. This policy proved quite unpopular, as did the steadily worsening food situation.\textsuperscript{53} The normative calorie levels may have not declined significantly, but an ever greater percentage was coming from simple carbohydrates, not protein and fats. Thus both producers and consumers were unhappy and pushed into the black market. Occupation troops engaged in the black market, buying illegally distilled spirits in particular, according to a British report from February 1946.

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Schleswig-Holsteinische Landpost}, 2.


\textsuperscript{53} Farquharson, \textit{The Western Allies}, 17-23.
This behavior exacerbated friction in British-German relations.54 Finally, extensive root vegetable cultivation was comparatively labor-intensive, a problem in Schleswig-Holstein, despite the high number of refugees, many of whom had agricultural skills.55

The significance of the so-called *Grünlandumbruch* is that it heralded regressive structural change for agriculture, in this case a major British-backed intervention by the government calling on farmers to turn away from animal husbandry (*Veredelung*) toward basic grains. Some 70,000 hectares of land were to be converted from grazing to cropland.56 In time, as the food situation stabilized, the trend again reverted away from potatoes. This interlude illustrates that structural change was not a predictable, linear process of agricultural modernization but more a reaction to contemporary social and economic demands. The land conversion project was a case in point of friction between occupiers and German civilians on the one hand, and German farmers on the other. Farquharson described it succinctly: “The one desired as many calories per hectare as possible, the other wanted to maximize the real economic return of the soil.”57 Land conversion angered farmers in Schleswig-Holstein as forcible dismantling (*Demontage*) of factories exercised German workers and industrialists. Kiel Mayor Gayk described exploiting widespread German mistrust of British motives in dismantling in a September 1946 memorandum: “Those who continue today to dismantle peaceful works in


55 Incompatibility of farm types is one reason why integration of refugees into agricultural labor was difficult. Milkers were in short supply in the Western zone, but in the East, a few specialists traditionally performed this task. Training new people would take time. Farquharson, *The Western Allies*, 57.


57 Farquharson, *The Western Allies*, 68. He points out that farmers interpreted livestock slaughter and culling not as a rational means to get food to city-dwellers but an invasive, punitive measure by the occupiers.
Germany are dismantling German democracy.” As we have seen, typical farms in Schleswig-Holstein were small- to medium-sized mixed operations. Ordinances calling for reduction of cattle herds by 10 percent may have sounded reasonable on paper, but in practice, such regulations threatened small landholders’ livelihoods (Substanz). As the following chapter demonstrates, the relationship between producers and consumers would continue to be tested into the 1950s. Although many British officials might not have realized it, the calls to expand root vegetable cultivation and restrict livestock husbandry and the instructions to farmers to proceed without much concern for profit exactly echoed the National Socialists’ autarky plan.

Given the chaotic state of agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein in this period and the uncertain authority, it follows that economic activity ran the gamut from unorthodox to downright illegal. Before structural change could be planned and implemented, the scarcity economy and existential struggle had to be overcome. “Self-help” carried many meanings and associations for German society in the wake of defeat. For farmers in particular, in the 1920s it meant an anti-government grassroots movement (Landvolkbewegung). By the late 1940s, it typically referred to barter, the black market, hoarding, or foraging expeditions (Hamsterfahrten) that skirted moral rectitude if not illegality. Just as the British Military Government categorized Germans as “blacks,” “grays,” or “whites” (from fanatical National Socialists to democrats), so did the market run from black through all shades of gray. Self-help involved both producers and consumers, blurring the distinction between the two. For example, city-dwellers were

58 Cited by Graham-Dixon, *The Allied Occupation*, 198. He focuses on the incendiary issue of dismantling German shipyards etc. in connection with the refugee unemployment crisis but says nothing about agriculture, 195-207.

59 For a list of Third Reich-era production plans, see Thyssen, *Bauer*, 288.

60 See Stüber, *Der Kampf*, 583, citing a speech by Johannes Semler from January 4, 1948, in which the director of the Economic Council spoke of a “dark gray, medium gray” and “black” market. In my dissertation, I do not consider the “professional group” of those engaged in the black market.
encouraged to tend small gardens to supplement meager rations. The hundreds of thousands of small gardens created during these years and tended by refugees contrasted starkly with the few families settled on new farms.\

The black market emerged as a result of the strictures of the Third Reich’s control economy (Zwangswirtschaft) and flourished as the population rose dramatically. In 1945, a cigarette might fetch a price of 12 RM and half a pound of butter as much as 400 RM. By way of context, a worker in the Rhineland made 150-200 RM per month from 1945 to 1948. In the phenomenon known as Hamsterfahrten, from the word hamstern, to hoard, for example, city dwellers would go to the countryside, trading their rugs and silverware for agricultural produce. This activity was illegal because it circumvented the rationing system, so bartering depended on trust. “There was a certain look. Some people were just trustworthy,” recalled one female farmer. In most cases, farmers banded together to post watchmen over their fields, particularly at night. Thus, farmers viewed Hamsterfahrten, which implied bartering between city-dwellers and farmers, as perfectly acceptable, whereas plundering and stripping fields (Feld- und Forstdiebstahl) was criminal.

How did farmers fare with food during the war? The cliché that farmers “always have something to eat” during war was true but with qualifications. Oral testimony indicates that the farmers’ diet was shorter on meat and butter than during peacetime and farmers had to make do

---

61 Stüber, Der Kampf, 267.

62 Wilhelm Postl, Bargteheide im Amt Tremsbüttel. Die Geschichte eines Dorfes: eine Dokumentation (Bargteheide, 1986), 137. Unfortunately, Postl does not provide a more precise date nor does he state where he obtained these figures.


64 Cited by Majewski, Landfrauenalltag, 209.
with ersatz-coffee made from roasted barley and chicory.\textsuperscript{65} Farm families were larger, and many had extra mouths to feed such as workers. Thus, the relationship between those in rural and industrial/urban areas was not as lopsided as one might think. Farmers were not necessarily reveling in surplus nor did all city-dwellers eke out an existence. The flourishing of the black market militates against this assumption.

Farmers were also involved in “black market slaughter” (\textit{Schwarzschlachtungen}), that is, illegally slaughtering their livestock, either for their own consumption or to sell. Instances of such slaughter that led to criminal proceedings are found in the \textit{Landesarchiv} in Schleswig, but unfortunately these files were not accessible to me. Hundreds of cases were reported in the special court (\textit{Sondergericht}) before 1945. The Third Reich could punish farmers severely. In Austria, cases of farmers being executed were reported. A December 1946 \textit{Landpost} article noted that 639 cases of slaughter were reported in June of that year, parenthetically asking how many more escaped officials’ attention.\textsuperscript{66} The author hastened to add that most were cases of ignorance of the guidelines and requirements. Slaughtering and dressing a pig was not an easy act to hide, particularly in homes filled with strangers such as refugees and Polish field workers.\textsuperscript{67} Agricultural periodicals such as the \textit{Landpost} published stories of black market slaughter. For example, in February 1947, the newspaper reported that a ring of eight people was busted, including farmer Karl Grünberg who sold two oxen for 3,000 RM in Eiderstedt.\textsuperscript{68} By providing readers with the name and informing them that the case was being referred to the

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{65}] Majewski and Stormarn interviews.
\item[\textsuperscript{66}] \textit{Landpost}, (December 1, 1946), 37.
\item[\textsuperscript{67}] Cited by Majewski, \textit{Landfrauenalltag}, 213.
\item[\textsuperscript{68}] \textit{Landpost} 97 Nr.2 (February 1, 1947), 11.
\end{itemize}
state’s attorney’s office, the newspaper editors probably hoped they could achieve some deterrent effect.

The recurring motif in memoirs regarding black market slaughter was that “everyone did it.” According to Herbert Lüth, a blacksmith in the town of Tremsbüttel, even the mayor, Carl Starck, was involved. Starck joked that Lüth was entitled to only half a pig, so he was supposed to slaughter “only half of it.” Asserting that “everyone” was somehow involved in the black market was a self-exculpatory mechanism. Because the black market activity was about survival, most reasoned, black market activity was necessary or excusable. Many labeled the first postwar years as an extreme situation

Postwar criminality peaked in Schleswig-Holstein from 1945 to 1948. On April 17, 1946, a 12-year-old boy disappeared from the Kiel train station, where he had been sent by his mother to sell bread on black market. He was discovered strangled in a bombed-out house and robbed of his bread and shoes. In 1945, 329 homicides were registered, and 127 were registered in 1946, but homicide figures then decreased precipitously to 19-20 per year in 1948 and 1949. The agriculture office for the district of Schleswig-Flensburg received a letter on September 28, 1945 from a farmer who complained that potatoes were stolen by the bagful right after they had been harvested. German police, being unarmed, were useless against bands of looters. The threat of total chaos in agricultural administration loomed large in a memorandum penned by Dr. Alex Gloy, who worked for the Food Office (Landesernährungsamt) in Kiel.

---


70 Cited by Borup, Demokratisierungsprozesse, 53.


72 Cited by Stüber, Der Kampf, 69.
Farmers’ “willingness to deliver” (*Ablieferungsfreudigkeit*) had been severely undermined by organized bands of thieves.\(^{73}\) Skirting the edge of anarchy rendered rational, economic agriculture impossible. Any sense of direction in terms of structural change was out of the question. In fact, no modernizing structural change actually in agriculture actually occurred in Schleswig-Holstein from 1945 to 1948. Farmers and rural society as a whole were thrown back to their own devices simply to survive. Farmers associated emergency situations with “self-help,” whereas “normal” periods during peace involved farmer-government interaction and structural change.

Occupation authorities categorized people according to their ability to feed themselves. Farmers were known as *Selbstversorger*, those with small gardens were *Teilselbstversorger*, and those in cities unable to grow food for themselves were *Normalverbraucher*.\(^{74}\) Ration cards and amounts were distributed accordingly. For daily survival, people had to devise many solutions. Those who wished to start a business needed sanction from a district economic committee in Bad Oldesloe.\(^{75}\) The NSDAP also created a system of classification based on one’s ability to grow food. Therefore, under both systems farmers were supposed to have a position of *relative* economic stability through a presumed ready access to food.

Farmers were fully involved in “self-help” and its moral ambiguities. “Self-help” meant taking democratic reform and the control economy with a pinch of salt. A “culture of

---

\(^{73}\) Memo from June 15, 1945, cited by Stüber, *Der Kampf*, 67.

\(^{74}\) Träbing, *Tremsbüttel*, 153. See Träbing for anecdotes of activities such as black market slaughter and moonshine (Schnapps made from potatoes).

dishonesty” pervaded consumers and producers alike as a survival strategy, which is further evidence that agricultural structural change was on hiatus. Patterns of farm size, type, and related questions were in limbo (Schwebezustand).

The currency reform on June 21, 1948 marked a decisive transition from the control economy toward the social market economy. The constant refrain from interviews and memoirs is that “all of a sudden, shop windows were full of goods.” This suggests, in retrospect at least, that the situation was gradually reverting to “normalcy.” Although German officials themselves had little influence in the planning and implementation of the currency reform, agriculture benefitted, though not as completely or immediately as popular memory now attests. The date of the reform, June 20, 1948, allowed farmers to reap that year’s harvest for “good money.” Each citizen in the three western zones (including Berlin) was granted 60 DM (Kopfgeld), of which 40 were to be disbursed immediately. Savings and debts (Altgeldguthaben und Forderungen) were reduced in a ratio of 10:1. However, the so-called Kopfgeld excluded farmers.

Although prices in trade and industry were freed, most agricultural products were still under control. The prices for potatoes, milk, and oil seed (Ölsaat) were raised, but prices for some fruits and vegetables were allowed to float. These changes encouraged farmers to sell their goods instead of stockpiling them. Herd sizes increased by 5 percent from January 1948 to January 1949. The currency reform created major budget problems in Schleswig-Holstein. The Bank deutscher Länder, which became the Bundesbank in 1957, kept a tight grip on credit and

76 Stüber, Der Kampf, 581.

77 Rohrbach, Im Schatten des Hungers, 209.

78 Rosenfeldt, Nicht einer, 127.

79 Rosenfeldt, Nicht einer, 125.

pursued a rigidly deflationary policy, ensuring that the *Land* was short on cash, making integrating refugees, transforming agriculture, and other projects very difficult.\(^81\) A price scissors soon caught farmers. Price caps for their products meant that they were short on cash, nullifying the effect of new machines that industry produced. The price for a Lanz tractor increased from 7,000 RM in June 1948 to 9,230 DM in October 1948, as the currency changed.\(^82\) Justus Rohrbach summarized the dilemma: farmers needed price incentives to produce more, but consumers could not be expected to shoulder higher prices before the greater supply had taken effect.\(^83\) Rohrbach concluded that from 1948 to 1949, the profitability of agriculture was by no means satisfactory for farmers. Over time, the repeated calls for farmers’ sense of social responsibility to keep prices down lost their effectiveness as the “force of economic realities”\(^84\) (*Gewalt der ökonomischen Tatsachen*) compelled farmers to contravene pronouncements. The widening “price scissors” between what farmers sold (i.e., their produce) and what they bought (i.e., such as machines, tools, and fertilizers) in the late 1940s was exactly the same problem farmers faced twenty years earlier. At that time, many chose to join the Rural People’s Movement, hoping to escape the economic impasse by bringing down the government. Now, farmers had to do the best they could, appealing to local German government or the British authorities.

Farmers’ memoirs tended to reflect on the confusing effects of the reform, focusing on the positive aspects of the currency reform and perpetuated myths, such as the sudden

---


\(^{82}\) Rosenfeldt, *Nicht einer*, 128.

\(^{83}\) Rohrbach, *Im Schatten*, 212.

\(^{84}\) Rohrbach, *Im Schatten*, 218.
disappearance of the black market. Johannes Maschmann noted laconically that his savings of 1,200 RM were converted into 120 DM. He could buy a new bicycle with this money.\textsuperscript{85} The currency reform could lead to confusion, as a handwritten letter to Oberregierungsrat Waszkewitz in Schleswig from October 25, 1948 attests.\textsuperscript{86} Evidence undermines the myth of the sudden turn for the better after the reform that was reiterated in memoirs. Cases involving legal disputes regarding tenants’ interest payments on farms stretched for up to two years after the reform.\textsuperscript{87} The June 1948 edition of the Bauernblatt devoted several pages to the currency reform, organizing its coverage thematically to emphasize its multi-faceted nature (Vielseitigkeit). The reform must have seemed confusing to many farmers at the time. Fortunately, the Farm Association helped them understand its particulars, which became an important precedent. The complexity and ambivalence of the currency reform in 1948 yielded memories of a smooth transition to “normalcy.” Farmers were part of a larger memory culture that sought to find stability and rapid improvement in the post-1948 years.

The control economy of the Third Reich gave way to the scarcity economy in the immediate postwar years. However, given bottlenecks in production, distribution, and the black market and the impact of tens of millions of refugees concentrating in the western zone, the notion of a liberal economic policy alternative was out of the question for the 1945-48 period.\textsuperscript{88} The currency reform is relevant to the political, social, and economic integration of agriculture because once farmers believed in the stability of the currency, they had less incentive to hoard or

\textsuperscript{85} Johannes Maschmann, \textit{Lebenserinnerungen eines Bauern am Heidknüll in Nutteln} (Heide, 1997), 177.

\textsuperscript{86} LAS Abt. 721, Nr. 660 (Währungsreform), letter from Frau Frieda Sierck to Oberregierungsrat Waszkewitz (October 25, 1948).

\textsuperscript{87} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{88} Ulrich Kluge, \textit{40 Jahre Agrarpolitik} vol.1, 45.
engage in illicit economic activity. Economic, political, and social means to integrate farmers into the new order emerged. Farmers no longer felt the need to resort to “self-help,” and by cooperating with the government, they could embark on structural change instead of subsistence production. Gradually, profit, rather than sheer survival, came to color their thinking.

2.3 New Self-Administration

The emergence of agricultural administration in Schleswig-Holstein in the 1945-48 period was a convoluted process based on long traditions of self-administration during the Second Reich and Weimar Republic, the National Socialist imposition of organizations such as the Reich Food Estate, the British occupation with its bureaucracies, and the rebuilding of the Land’s own administration. One cannot speak of an administrative “clean slate” for Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture, for 1945 or any other year. The postwar structures and institutions in which agriculture operated were supposed to be democratic; when this idea began to be translated into a real change of political culture among the bureaucrats is much more difficult to ascertain. In this section, I summarize the government structures that governed agriculture. Similar to other researchers, I take both actors and the structures in which they operate as key aspects of democratization. Studying administrative history is important because it addresses an issue that concerned the Western Powers: the extent to which ex-National Socialists were serving in civil administration.

The reconstruction of agricultural administration in Schleswig-Holstein proceeded at three levels: the government ministry responsible for farming; the agricultural chamber, which

---

89 Seggern, *Demokratisierung*, 12.
was partially official and partially private; and the independent Farmers’ Association.\footnote{Thyssen, \textit{Bauer und Standesvertretung}. Our main source for the reorganization of agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein is provided by Thyge Thyssen, a prominent and long time government official in Schleswig-Holstein’s agricultural bureau. He was secretary for the agricultural chamber in the 1940s and 1950s.} From 1945 to 1948, agrarian politics were the \textit{Landtag}’s central economic concern.\footnote{Klaus-J. Lorenzen-Schmidt, “Die gescheiterte Bodenreform in Schleswig-Holstein,” \textit{Zeitgeschichte Regional. Mitteilungen aus Mecklenburg-Vorpommern} 3 Nr. 1 (July 1999): 13-17, here 14.}

The agriculture committee for the first \textit{Landtag} on April 11, 1946 was composed of three CDU delegates (Willi Rickers presided), one from the short-lived “Konservativen Aufbaupartei,” two SPD delegates and one KPD delegate.\footnote{Thyssen, \textit{Bauer}, 426.} Although committee members and the \textit{Landtag} itself were British-appointed, the occupiers tried to fashion a legislature with a cross-section of society. Thyge Thyssen noted that the first agriculture minister, Willi Rickers, faced a variety of dispersed and complicated administrative institutions, a vestige of the days when Schleswig-Holstein was a Prussian province. Ministers Rickers, Hans Bundtzen (CDU), and Bundtzen’s successor Erich Arp (SPD) consolidated some of these agencies. One of the changes most important to our discussion that Arp introduced was the Division for Land and Agricultural Structure (\textit{Boden- und Agrarordnung}), headed by Dr. Wilhelm Friedrich Boyens. He assumed responsibility for settlement, waterways, and soil (\textit{Bodenkultur}).\footnote{Thyssen, \textit{Bauer}, 434. Dr. Boyens was relieved of his duties in May 1949 to fully concentrate on his specialty, land reform, which culminated in the 30,000 hectare Agreement, as we shall see.} Minister Arp created further divisions for consumer interests and research and development (e.g., dairy testing, statistics).

According to Thyssen, Arp’s attempt to incorporate the greater part of the Land’s agricultural bureaucracy within his ministry was due to the foot-dragging of the Military Government on a law for democratizing agriculture that had been passed in the \textit{Landtag}.\footnote{Thyssen, \textit{Bauer}, 434.} Arp...
and his successors were able to consolidate the administration, helping to cut costs. Thyssen believed the British wished to reduce the agricultural chamber (*Landesbauernkammer*) to a rubber stamp for executive decisions that higher authorities made. Furthermore, the agriculture ministry was not designed as the chamber’s superior; rather, the chamber was to follow the decrees of the bizonal food administration (*Ernährungsverwaltung*) in Frankfurt. Total defeat of Germany and the postwar British military presence meant adding more layers of administration.

Thyssen claimed that both agricultural ministries and independent farming organizations were democratized from the ground up. Thyssen himself was *Kammerdirektor* in the 1920s until the National Socialists sacked him. Thus, when he wrote in the late 1950s, underscoring the new democratic spirit pervading the chamber was in his interest. Membership was voluntary, in contrast to the RNS. The *Führer* principle and monopolistic tendencies were eliminated. The British removed most farming leaders who served during the Third Reich at different bureaucratic levels in the summer of 1945.\(^95\) However, the validity of Thyssen’s assessment that thorough reforms were underway is unclear. His claim certainly echoes British intentions to rebuild, democratize, and strengthen German local administration.\(^96\) In a copy of an administrative directive sent to the district of Steinburg in February 1946, the British outlined freedoms of expression and assembly, as well as the principle of electing local magistrates. This document transplanted to the local level a core element from the Potsdam Agreement, namely decentralization.

\(^95\) Thyssen, *Bauer*, 439. That is the most *Kreisbauernführer, Landesbauernführer, Landesobmänner, Landeshauptabteilungsleiter*.

At the time, there were repeated calls to dissolve the Bauernschaft, a vestigial structure of the Third Reich, and democratize farm organizations.97 Greater urgency initially supported preserving supervision and control over agriculture to maximize production. During the occupation, control of farmers extended to the lowest level. Between March and April 1946, at least 2,000 control commissions were established in Schleswig-Holstein. Each consisted of a district farm chief (Kreisbauernvorsteher), a farmer from a neighboring area, one or two mayor-appointed consumers’ representatives, and occasionally a British officer. The commissions were authorized to inspect farms and ensure farmers met their quotas. With the permission of the military government, the commissions were empowered to seize and forcibly auction operations run by “malicious” (böswillig) farmers.98 This activity led to understandable complaints by farmers that inspections were one-sided: inspections punished offenders and created no incentive for farmers to exceed production quota levels.

The British recognized and accepted continuities in personnel in the Landesbauernschaft:

The charge advanced by the KPD and SPD that the main personalities of the Landesbauernschaft were still at work seems to be true, but is equally of little political significance, since their activities do not appear to be colored unduly with the hues of the old Reichnährstand, although they form a useful butt of any political party which cannot think of anything else.99

As a totalitarian political system, National Socialism could leave no aspect of society untouched, even seemingly apolitical organizations such as local farm administration. The 1947 situation report cited above indicates that the British distinguished between nominal Party affiliation and commitment to ideology. They assumed that most bureaucrats at lower levels of

97 See for example that of Hugo Bischoff (KPD), Landesbibliothek Kiel, Norddeutsches Echo July 13, 1946.

98 Rosenfeldt, Nicht einer, 71.

agricultural administration were “just doing their jobs” without necessarily being unreformed National Socialists.

Nonetheless, Germans made some concrete initiatives toward democratization on the regional level only to be frustrated by the British. On October 19, 1945 the new district agriculture directors (Kreisbauernvorsteher) were summoned to Hamburg to elect the new state director (Landesbauernvorsteher). They unanimously voted for Peter Jensen (Ausacker), then the district chief for Flensburg. For farming organizations, the leadership principle was abolished, elections were introduced, and assemblies at the county and district levels were to be composed of farmers, farm laborers, consumers, city officials, and so on. The farm organizations’ statutes were subordinated to the Land and military government.¹⁰⁰ In sum, the reorganization of agricultural administration within the government alternated between continuity and change in the form of democratic institutional reform because the British were interested in maximizing production and thus averse to disrupting how the system ran and the Germans wished to retain their jobs.

The organizational development of the agriculture chamber, a body which stood somewhere between the Land government and independent farmers, emerged from the complex background of Schleswig-Holstein’s long tradition of self-administration. The imprint of the Reich Food Estate and the new postwar administrations improvised to deal with the food crisis. The old Landesbauernschaft, a holdover from the Third Reich, was not immediately incorporated into the Land government but subordinated to the Regional Food Office. Thyssen claimed that most farmers who had served in public office at the county or district level during

¹⁰⁰ Thyssen, Bauer, 440-41.
the Third Reich were sacked and many interned, but most were released to resume their posts after a short stint in detainment. 101

In November 1945, Peter Jensen worked closely with district farm directors (Kreisbauernvorsteher) to draft a law to democratize the Landesbauernschaft at the grassroots. 102 His efforts were frustrated by the British but are important in revealing farmers’ attitudes toward democratic local government. As a member of the Landtag, Jensen was in the position to get the ball rolling. The bill was reviewed in a slightly modified form by the agriculture committee and read in three sessions in the summer of 1946. It passed unanimously on July 30, 1946. 103 Thyssen sketched the outlines of this bill, which indicated how leaders in agriculture at the time envisioned democratizing government agencies at different levels. Every village (Ort) would elect a director (Vorsteher), his deputy, and someone to represent farm laborers. The elections were to be general and secret and enfranchise any man or woman engaged in agriculture. 104 This process was to be repeated at the county (Bezirk) and district (Kreis) levels.

The full assembly of the chamber would consist of district leaders and farm labor representatives, forty delegates from food processing companies (eight of whom were to be from cooperatives and eight from consumer groups), the chair of agricultural cooperatives in Schleswig-Holstein, four women elected from the rural women’s organization, three representatives from the fishery, two from the farm workers’ organization, and a representative of the minister president of Schleswig-Holstein from the Hamburg senate. The chamber was

101 Thyssen, Bauer, 439.
102 Thyssen, Bauer, 440.
103 Wortprotokoll Landtag I, 7 Sitzung 30.7.1946, p.16-43.
104 Thyssen, Bauer, 440.
intended to be a public corporation (Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts), the legal successor to the defunct Reich Food Estate. The first assembly of the agriculture chamber, formed on such a democratic basis, occurred on November 28, 1947 and amounted to a de facto hollowing out of the Reich Food Estate even before its official demise, at least in Schleswig-Holstein.105

The dry details behind the democratic structures paralleled more explicit discussions about farmers and democracy. The first issue of the Landpost from October 1, 1946 retooled traditional self-administration of agriculture in terms of a “farmers’ democracy” (Bauerndemokratie). That is, the rhetoric claimed a revival of local practices but did not specify in what form or when this “farmers’ democracy” had previously existed in Schleswig-Holstein. It certainly existed neither in the Third Reich nor in the Weimar Republic. The language is redolent with words such as Volk and Heimat, but also Demokratie. Addressing farmers in Schleswig-Holstein at large, the editor wrote: “We need to see to it that our professional and personal behavior corresponds to newly won rights. Democracy not only means rule by the people but connection to the Volk.”106 The specious use of a “farmers’ democracy” was a clever way of telling the British what they wished to hear because they were at pains to revive democratic traditions from before 1933.107 British mistrust of the Prusso-German administration dovetailed well with Schleswig-Holstein’s traditional anti-Prussianism, expressed in strong self-government. In the end, the British refused to recognize the bill as a law. Thyssen retrospectively lamented this lost opportunity for democratization. The British at the time were probably

105 As observed by Stüber, Der Kampf, 153.


107 von Seggern, Alte und neue Demokraten, 41, citing British research during World War II to analyze the fall of the Weimar Republic.
uncomfortable with the Germans’ speed at trying to reconfigure self-government. They grasped for sovereignty in a peremptory manner. As we saw earlier, the British were repelled by the “pugnacious” politics of Schleswig-Holstein farmers.

Tracing the evolution of agricultural administration in Schleswig-Holstein illuminates both the ideals and realities of using official or institutional means to erect a democracy. Kurt Jürgensen, the doyen of Schleswig-Holstein’s postwar history, wrote that this Land was supposed to be a model “in which democratic forms of self-administration were to be tested and implemented.” The wider significance of agricultural production and meeting Allied expectations for self-administration was simple. The Military Governors for the British and American zones measured political “maturity” of German administration to the extent that it complied in meeting agricultural production targets. The military governors considered making food imports contingent upon German production. Thus in the immediate postwar years, the British occupiers actually hindered rather than furthered local initiatives for the democratization of Schleswig-Holstein’s regional agricultural institutions because they gave absolute priority to the maximization of production through top-down control.

Rebuilding farming interest organizations and establishing contacts to political parties represented the final layer in self-administration in Schleswig-Holstein. During the fall of 1945, farming organizations coalesced in various Länder. The leading figure behind this movement

---


was Andreas Hermes, former Reich Minister in various departments in the Weimar Republic, including agriculture.\textsuperscript{111} After failing to gain Allied permission to form a national Bauernverband in September 1945, he managed to found an equivalent for Bavaria that November with US backing.\textsuperscript{112} Farmers at the local level were slow to establish institutional traction. In her study of political elites who helped rebuild democracy in Schleswig-Holstein, Jessica von Seggern noted that the British did not have an easy task finding both competent and politically acceptable people in this process.\textsuperscript{113} Men such as Struve were all the more remarkable for their willingness to enter politics and assume responsibility when politics had been discredited.

Andreas Hermes sought to rejuvenate regional chapters and establish guidelines. Johannes Hummel, the soon-to-be business manager of the Farmers’ Association, wrote to Hermes on September 14, 1946 with a list of suggested leaders for each Land. He could think of no one who appropriate for Schleswig-Holstein.\textsuperscript{114} Hummel’s letter outlined questions that were to be hashed out in a meeting one week hence. He was probably aware how Schleswig-Holstein’s farmers were implicated in National Socialism. Perhaps he was unfamiliar with Detlef Struve, Peter Jensen, and other leaders with a clean political past.

On October 29, 1946, a Working Group for German Farmers’ Associations was formed in Munich. On May 16, 1947, the board of governors of the Working Group convened, chaired

\textsuperscript{111} For Hermes’ biography see Gesine Gerhard, Peasants into Farmers. Agriculture and Democracy in West Germany. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Iowa (2000).

\textsuperscript{112} Kluge, 40 Jahre vol.1, 51.

\textsuperscript{113} Seggern, Demokratisierung, 25.

\textsuperscript{114} ACDP 02-090 (Nachlass Andreas Hermes), 026/1, Arbeitsgemeinschaft deutscher Bauernverbände.
by Hermes and his deputies, Michael Horlacher and Edmund Rehwinkel. Schleswig-Holstein sent its own delegation to the meeting. The National Farmers’ Association became a registered organization (e.V.) on August 17, 1948, and Hermes was unanimously elected as its president that October. The organization’s manager, Johannes Hummel, admitted in a later article that the composition of the members’ assembly was “not proportional from a strictly mathematical point of view” but insisted that it was a non-compulsory, representative body of democratically elected delegates.115 Writing ten years after the founding of the Association, Hummel emphasized how the national organization had avoided the factionalism and disputes that had dogged agriculture in the 1920s.116 Upon the founding of the Federal Republic in September 1949, the German Farmers’ Association profiled itself by declaring that “the time when professional groups’ interests are played off one another has passed.”117 This statement was as far as the agrarian lobby was prepared to admit past wrongs in the form of the farm lobby’s unrealistic demands upon the beleaguered Weimar democracy.

In the case of Schleswig-Holstein, Peter Jensen, Willi Rickers, and Friedrich-Wilhelm Lübke only formed the Farmers’ Association on February 12, 1947. Thyge Thyssen attributed the delay to reluctance to participate in politics. Many farmers were deeply implicated in National Socialism. For those who had retired from public life during the regime, many saw little reason to re-enter politics. They recalled the bitter disputes of the Weimar Republic.118

---


116 It is true that the loss of large estates East of the Elbe rendered agriculture more homogenous in the western zone.

117 Cited by Hohenstein, Bauernverbände, 305. There was, for example, a traditional clash between industrialists bent on maximizing German exports and farmers’ groups.

118 Thyssen, Bauer, 452.
In accordance with what Allan Borup dubbed the “license principle” (Lizenzprinzip), organizations such as the Association had to gain Allied sanction.\textsuperscript{119} The Association had to operate in roughly the same fashion as any political party or newspaper. Indeed, the organization would have to go further, with a firm commitment to party and confessional neutrality. Before 1945, Schleswig-Holstein had a negligible Catholic population. The influx of refugees became a Catholic minority that one could not ignore. Still, Thyssen’s avowal of the farm association’s political neutrality must be taken with a pinch of salt. British observers noted in November 1947 that “although the farmers [in Schleswig-Holstein] claim not to be political and in their political meetings invariably pay homage to the idea of political neutrality, they are in fact very political in the conservative sense.”\textsuperscript{120} This sentiment was a legacy of the Weimar Republic. In agricultural circles in the 1920s, “non-political” was a code word for conservatism. Conservatism and Protestantism could no longer be the automatic default positions.

Peter Jensen presided over the assembly to found the Schleswig-Holstein Farmers’ Association in Rendsburg. Of the five people elected to form the board of governors, two were Social Democrats and the rest were Christian Democrats, including Detlef Struve and Friedrich Wilhelm Lübke.\textsuperscript{121} People could join the Association as individuals or as part of cooperatives. Members were expected to pay dues, and membership was open to farmers, workers, and anyone with an interest in farming. Subgroups focused on farm youth and women.

British authorities appointed Jensen district agriculture director (Kreisbauernvorsteher) for Flensburg in July 1945 due to his experience working for the agriculture chamber before

\textsuperscript{119} Borup, \textit{Demokratisierungsprozesse}, 14.

\textsuperscript{120} Cited by Borup, \textit{Demokratisierungsprozesse}, 106.

\textsuperscript{121} Thyssen, \textit{Bauer}, 453.
In 1947, he was elected president of the reconstituted agriculture chamber in Schleswig-Holstein, a post he held until 1968. Along with Lübke, he was a co-founder of the CDU in Flensburg. Jensen was a Landtag delegate from 1946 until 1967. He was thus an active politician at the district and Land level as well as a highly respected expert on agricultural matters. Jensen’s political influence was considerable. For example, after the Landtag election of July 9, 1950, when the CDU and other bourgeois parties failed to win a majority, the CDU was forced to form a coalition with the Bund der Heimatlosen und Entrechteten (BHE), a right-wing party that represented refugees. A crisis of Land government followed, in which the CDU and BHE could not agree on fundamental policy. Minister President Dr. Walter Bartram (CDU) resigned, and Peter Jensen was instrumental in enabling his friend and college, Friedrich-Wilhelm Lübke, to replace Bartram. Jensen’s commitment to farmers and his democratic credentials received fulsome praise in a speech by his successor, Günther Flessner, in 1969. According to Flessner:

You are one of the men of the first hour, belonging to that generation which managed, after total defeat, to feed the population, to secure trust with the occupying powers and to rebuild an orderly democracy out of chaos.

Another founding father was Wilhelm Behrens, who had worked in Berlin as a journalist in agrarian politics during the Third Reich. He was the brainchild behind the twelve statutes of the Association, which were formulated in February but were first published in December 1947, when the Association’s newspaper, Das Bauernblatt, appeared. The farming community’s


124 Das Bauernblatt, 5 April 1969, 1307.

main publication from August 1945 to October 1946 was the monthly “Announcements” (Bekanntmachungen) published by the Regional Food Office. Starting in October 1946, the British granted farmers a license to publish the bi-monthly “Landpost,” which eventually was transformed into the Bauernblatt, a primary source of central importance for this dissertation. The editor-in-chief was Johannes Eichmeier, whose strongly worded editorials will feature prominently in the subsequent narrative.

The preamble to these statutes declared that in view of the recent “collapse” (Zusammenbrucherscheinungen) and future responsibilities to rebuild, (Aufbauverpflichtungen), farmers must come together on a “free and democratic basis.” Of the twelve statutes published in December 1947, several merit special mention. The declared purpose of the organization was to support agricultural production and all persons engaged in it. The Association claimed that its tasks were not only to participate in but initiate agrarian legislation, to stop the discrimination against farm labor, halt the “flight from the land,” to advise and provide services for farmers, to support education, and to “enlighten” (aufklären) city dwellers. The association was to accomplish all these tasks by means of a “competitive and independent press that transcends party lines.” The British accepted the statutes.

The Association organized at the village, county (Bezirk), district (Kreis), and Land levels. Delegates at each level were elected to serve in committees at the next higher level of administration. On December 1, 1947, Detlef Struve was elected chairman. He had previously been part of the Frankfurt Economic Council until its dissolution and was also a delegate for the CDU in the Bundestag. The business manager of the association was Otto Clausen. The

---

126 Das Bauernblatt, December 1947, 1.
127 Thyssen, Bauer, 453.
Schleswig-Holstein Association immediately joined the national association under Andreas Hermes. A progressive union for farmers was founded in Kiel in August 1947 (*Fortschrittlichen Landwirte- Bauern- und Pachtverbandes*), but the British allowed only one umbrella organization for farmers. This rival organization soon disappeared, which set an important precedent. In the 1950s and 1960s, complaints surfaced in the farm association that it had become too monolithic, stifling contrarian opinions. Permitting only one professional organization for farmers was originally intended to avoid partisanship and political fragmentation that had undone the Weimar Republic. Farmers were supposed to compromise and set political differences aside in their umbrella organization.

The first Farmers’ Day (*Landesbauerntag*) was held on March 19, 1948 with the newly elected head of the organization, Detlef Struve, presiding. Approximately 2,000 elected representatives from the villages throughout the Land attended the meeting. Four hundred farmers, the deputies from the main committees from the district farmers’ groups, came together to form the “farmers’ parliament.” In time, the Farmers’ Association, as an “active minority group,”\(^\text{128}\) would come to exert considerable effect in Land politics. The Association expressed a commitment to democracy, though it was due more to the need to win British approval than political conviction. The Association certainly tried to avoid the mistakes of the Weimar Republic by making an effort to be more inclusive and eschew partisan politics. As we shall see, its connection to the CDU was close but not without difficulties.

The founding of the Farmers’ Association was linked to the history of the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein. The CDU first cells coalesced around strong personalities in the Land.\(^\text{129}\)

---


\(^{129}\) Varain, *Parteien*, 38.
The groups centered on Dr. Schlange-Schönigen in East Holstein (Plön), Carl Schröter in Kiel, and Theodor Steltzer and Detlef Struve in Rendsburg. Befitting his own background, Schlange-Schönigen’s concepts focused on English conservatism, associated with landed gentry.\(^{130}\) He described himself as “staatskonservativ” with the state being based upon Christian morals.\(^ {131}\) This reflected his gradual shift in political identity from an East Elbian Junker into a “Vernunftrepublikaner” during the 1920s. Schöningen recognized integrating German National and Liberal supporters from the Weimar Republic was key, to create a Protestant counterbalance to Catholic southern Germany, and create a “Sammlungspartei” composed of anyone to the right of the SPD.\(^ {132}\) Schlange-Schönigen recalled the splintering (Zersplitterung) of parties in the Weimar Republic all too well. The unifying factor was a Christianity not bound to a particular denomination.\(^ {133}\)

The Kiel contingent centered on Schröter was composed of bankers, industrialists, pastors, and professors, and it eventually became the strongest branch of the CDU. During the Weimar Republic, Schröter had been a member of the right-of-center German People’s Party (DVP). His postwar group, using the SPD’s Heidelberg Program from 1925 as a guide, was most

\(^{130}\) We should remind the reader that he was also a refugee from Pomerania. Horstwalter Heitzer’s history of the CDU in the British zone portrays Schlange-Schönigen in a misleading way. He describes him as a “Bauernführer,” a title Schlange-Schönigen would never have accepted in the 1920s and 1930s. After World War II, he might have done so for tactical purposes. Schlange-Schönigen was not a nobleman, but he was a Gutsbesitzer, not a Bauer. See Horstwalter Heitzer, Die CDU in der britischen Zone 1945-1949: Gründung, Organisation, Programm und Politik (Düsseldorf, 1988), 107.

\(^{131}\) Hans Schlange-Schönigen, Am Tage danach (Hamburg, 1946), 22, 27, 41, 121.

\(^{132}\) Tilton, Nazism, 99; Varain, Parteien, 40.

Paul Pagel, a liaison between politics and agriculture, was instrumental in starting the CDU in his district of Bad Segeberg. According to his journal on September 14, 1945, he heard on the radio that the British were permitting the formation of political parties. After some deliberation, he filed for an application to found a party. He was allowed to found one only for Segeberg, and he thought the party was “to include everyone except Communists and Social Democrats.” Pagel worked with Willi Rickers to found a “Christian-Democratic Party.” On September 19, Pagel met with the Kiel and Rendsburg groups to create the party platform. Although others were skeptical, Pagel confided to his journal that Christianity was the “only viable basis (Grundlage) in Western culture.”

The Rendsburg group benefitted from Struve courting farmers “with singular intensity.” In 1957, the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein conducted an internal census and found that of 12,606 party members, 4,035 (or 32 percent) were farmers. In areas of Schleswig or Husum, the proportion of farmers could exceed 50 percent, but party membership in the 1950s was only a rough measure of support for the CDU because many were willing to vote for it but not join. Adolf Steckel and Detlef Struve submitted an application to form the Christlich-

---

134 Heitzer, *Die CDU*, 110.
135 Journal entry from September 15, 1945, ACDP III-006-103.
136 Ibid, entry from 20 September 1945.
137 Tilton, *Nazism*, 99. He noted, however, that no reliable public opinion surveys exist for Schleswig-Holstein and that national polling services did not collect sufficient material on the Land level to be considered representative.
138 Varain, *Parteien*, 44.
On December 5, 1945 the “Christian Democratic Party” was founded in Rendsburg, with Steckel presiding, the farmer Detlef Struve as his deputy, and Carl Schröter as speaker. The main ideas of the Rendsburg group stemmed from Theodor Steltzer, who had been a member of the Kreisau resistance during the Third Reich. He believed the new political order had to allow the widest possible discretion for self-administration, organized at the grassroots.

Steltzer diagnosed the elimination of self-administration and declining participation of citizens in local government as the defining characteristic of the modernizing state, be it totalitarian or liberal-democratic. His accent on communal politics found eager listeners among farmers. He sought a broader basis of support than Schlange-Schöningen, hoping to build consensus across class lines. In Steltzer’s opinion, the “characteristic of democracy is that political parties work together (zusammenwirken).” Steltzer would later become Schleswig-Holstein’s first minister president. At the grounding meeting in Rendsburg, Schröter declared that their aim was to bring together all voters to the right of the Social Democrats.

---


140 Mosberg, 50 Jahre CDU, 21. Ties between the Rendsburg and Kiel group had been established in September 1945. Schröter quickly emerged as the dominant figure in the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein, not least due to his great rhetorical talents and the fact that, as a retired secondary school teacher, he had the time to devote himself to politics in a way which neither Schlange-Schöningen nor Steltzer could. See Borup, Demokratisierungsprozesse, 96. On February 15, 1946 he was elected chairman of the Schleswig-Holstein CDU.


142 Hans Georg Wieck, Die Entstehung und die Wiedergründung des Zentrums im Jahre 1945 (Düsseldorf, 1953), 178. Wieck wrote the first history of the CDU. His account is enriched through many interviews with leading personalities in the early CDU. However, Detlef Struve was not among those interviewed.

143 Kieler Nachrichten, “Wir brauchen die Mitarbeit eines jeden.” Italics in original.

144 Wulf, “Sammlung,” 134.
Another important figure in this group was Detlef Struve. He was founding member of both the CDU and Farmers’ Association in Schleswig-Holstein, making him a central figure in the political and economic transformation of agriculture. Born in 1903 to a large farming family in the village of Wienböken, he pursued education in agronomy and was politically active from his early 20s. He served as chair of the district Young Farmers group in Rendsburg from 1925 to 1928. In 1928, he acquired his own farm in Embühren. As the later minister president Gerhard Stoltenberg (CDU) wrote in his dissertation on the Rural People’s Movement of the 1920s, farmers in the youth groups would come to lead agriculture after 1945. Stoltenberg claimed that although some members expressed cranky anti-urban attitudes, men such as Struve were more open to progressive ideas, but we cannot be sure. Stoltenberg was a Christian Democrat writing about a fellow Christian Democrat in the early 1960s, when Struve was at the height of his influence. Struve’s political sensibilities in the late 1920s are another matter. In many of their ideas and practices the young farmers were part of the wider youth movement (Jugendbewegung), which sought to cultivate young people to become hard-working, conscientious, and moral members of society. Struve’s reaction to the rise of National Socialism is unclear. He served in World War II and immediately resumed political activity

145 He had six brothers and two sisters!

146 Landesbibliothek Kiel, Bauernverband Schleswig-Holstein e.V. and CDU Rendsburg-Eckernförde (eds), Gedenkveranstaltung 100. Geburtstag Detlef Struve 12 Mai 2003, 5. The summary of Struve’s early political career is provided by Otto Bernhardt, MdB, chair of CDU Rendsburg-Eckernförde. Struve left neither a literary estate (Nachlass) nor do we have his a biography.


148 Heberle, Landbevölkerung und Nationalsozialismus, 147-49.

149 I would be particularly interested in his activities in the Rural People’s Movement when he was in his mid-twenties. Sadly, no mention of him appears in the best account of this phenomenon in any language, Michèle Le Bars, Le Mouvement Paysan dans le Schleswig-Holstein 1928-1932 (Bern/New York, 1986). Nor do we learn about
when he was released from a prisoner of war camp in June 1945. That July, he was elected chairman (Amtsvorsteher) for Lütjenwestedt. Although he was an important figure in Schleswig-Holstein’s agrarian politics, he carefully cultivated the “apolitical” public persona by leaving neither a literary estate (Nachlass) nor memoirs behind. Struve, whose formative political years lay in the Weimar Republic, shared the British recognition that farmers’ “non-political” stance was in fact tacit conservatism. He was a product of the “politics of local notables” (Honoratiorenpolitik) in which wealthier influential men in farming, the professions, and clergy dominated communal politics. The National Socialists tried with uneven success to overturn this way of doing things. They were hard pressed in many cases to come up with farmers who were both respected members of their community, competent administrators, and Party members. In the postwar period, local politics was reconstituted around men such as Struve. A fifty-year anniversary history of the CDU in Rendsburg revealed that Adolf Steckel and Theodor Steltzer approached Struve to help “rebuild our homeland” (Heimat). The CDU’s beginnings in Rendsburg consisted of meetings at Steckel’s home, with farmers, tax attorneys, car dealers, and publishers comprising the group.

We should not assume that close ties between the CDU and farmers in Schleswig-Holstein were natural or automatic. Indeed, the idea of forming an inclusive party (Sammlungspartei) to the right of the SPD emerged not necessarily out of antipathy to it, but because negotiations to bridge agricultural and working-class interests had broken down. Labor union leaders in Hamburg hatched an idea to form a “Labour Party” that represented the interests


150 Landesbibliothek Kiel, 50 Jahre Kreisverband CDU Rendsburg-Eckernförde, 11. In a pamphlet jointly published by the farmers’ association and CDU on the centenary of Struve’s birth, no mention is made of his political activities 1933-1939; Bauernverband e.V. and CDU-Renbdsburg/Eckernförde (eds), Gedenkveranstaltung, 100.Geburtstag Detlef Struve (Rendsburg, 2003).
of both farmers and industrial workers. Pagel, Rickers, and Struve were receptive to the idea.\textsuperscript{151} Theodor Steltzer himself cherished it, meeting with Hamburg mayor Rudolf Petersen (CDU) and labor union leader Franz Spliedt in mid-September 1945 to this end. Earlier that month, the Kiel branch of the SPD informed its members that it was to be refashioned as a “people’s party” \textit{(Volkspartei)} by “reaching beyond the working class and penetrating” \textit{(einzugreifen)} into farming circles.”\textsuperscript{152} The Communists attempted to gain a foothold among farmers in Itzehoe,\textsuperscript{153} but realities fell short of intentions. Neither the SPD nor KPD were able to win large numbers of farmers to their parties, leading Carl Schröter to snort contemptuously that the only members of the SPD or KPD in farmers’ associations were party managers.\textsuperscript{154} It seems the SPD had sufficient trouble as it was organizing and informing farm laborers about the goals of the SPD.\textsuperscript{155} Expanding the SPD to include bourgeois circles ran into too much internal opposition. Only after hopes for expanding the base of the SPD faded were ideas hatched to bring together constituents to the right of it.

The founding of the Farmers’ Association, the CDU, and the emergent relationship between the two in Schleswig-Holstein focused on integration and inclusiveness, which was a function of lessons from the Weimar Republic and the need to secure British approval. The extent of inclusivity should not be overestimated: avowals of confessional neutrality did not count for much in a \textit{Land} that was overwhelmingly Protestant, and integrating farmers no longer

\textsuperscript{151} Wieck, \textit{Die Entstehung}, 179. Steltzer was also inspired by the British Labour Party, if his memoirs are to be believed; Steltzer, \textit{Sechzig Jahre}, 182.


\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Norddeutsches Echo}, 12 February 1947.

\textsuperscript{154} \textit{Kieler Nachrichten} 20 September 1947.

\textsuperscript{155} Giet, “Wiedergründung,” 262n.160.
required bridging the considerable gaps among large estate owners, middling farmers, and small cottagers, as had been the case in the 1920s. Nevertheless, we cannot question the democratic credentials of leading agro-politicians in Schleswig-Holstein such as Struve, Pagel, and Jensen. Their long tenure in respective public office ensured that the Farmers’ Association and agriculture chamber reflected their political sensibilities.

2.4 Denazification and Land Reform

Denazification and land reform pitted conservatives against Social Democrats in Schleswig-Holstein from 1947 to 1949. Removing the politically compromised individuals from positions of authority and the redistribution of property were two very different approaches to the democratization of rural society. The controversy surrounding both approaches is a case study for how early German government in Schleswig-Holstein avoided central questions when facing the political past and providing economic measures for the future.

Denazification, in addition to the chaos of the immediate postwar situation, may have caused hesitation among farmers considering public office. In her study on the farming organizations in neighboring Lower Saxony, Angelika Hohenstein suggested that British prohibitions against organizations also convinced many farmers that such groups were futile. Nonetheless, the founding meeting for the Lower Saxon “Landvolk” on February 17, 1947 was the culmination of years of furtive correspondence and meetings among farmers and their

---

156 Note the difference in the terms Landreform and Flurbereinigung. The first meant “land reform” in a political sense, that is, to distribute land “fairly” (whatever that might mean), settle farm laborers and refugees onto plots, or set upper limits on farm sizes. Flurbereinigung was also agricultural land reform, but in a more economic sense, such as optimizing farm size and layouts. We might translate it as “land reconsolidation.” Nevertheless, it usually had political implications because consolidating farmland meant reducing the number of farms while increasing their size.

157 Hohenstein, Bauernverbände, 81.
representatives to organize themselves. It would be reasonable to assume that something similar transpired in Schleswig-Holstein in the period from the summer 1945 through early spring 1947. Farmers were most concerned with survival at this time. Organizing themselves into an interest group and rebuilding civil society would have to wait.

Given the strong rural basis of support for the NSDAP in Schleswig-Holstein, it is puzzling at first glance that scholarship should not have investigated denazification in agriculture. In fact, archival records are inadequate for the task of reconstructing denazification at the Land level. British sociologists working for the Foreign Office during the final stages of World War II recommended that certain organizations not be dissolved, such as the Reich Food Estate, so as not to interrupt food distribution. To fire someone in agricultural administration, one needed the permission of the Economic Division of the Control Commission, British Element. Not surprisingly, the various memoirs and interviews of farmers mentioned little to nothing about denazification. Those granting interviews were rarely in positions of authority during the Third Reich anyway.

---

158 Heberle, Landbevölkerung, Timothy Allan Tilton, Nazism, Neo-Nazism and the Peasantry, Stoltenberg, Politische Strömungen, Le Bars, Le Mouvement.

159 I was dissuaded from pursuing this initial dissertation project by Dr. Sven Schoen at the Landesarchiv Schleswig-Holstein.

160 Jill Jones, “Eradicating Nazism from the British Zone of Germany: Early Policy and Practice,” German History 8 no. 2 (1990): 145-162, here 149. Also Ian Turner, “Denazification in the British Zone,” in ibidem (ed.), Reconstruction in Post-War Germany: British Occupation Policy & the Western Zones, 1945-55 (Oxford, 1989), 239-267, here 257. Turner investigates the political frameworks of British Denazification and tracks how their priorities shifted over time. Similar to most scholars, his comments on agriculture are perfunctory. Allan Borup’s dissertation on democratization in Schleswig-Holstein restricts itself to generalities on denazification, such as the British lacked the “missionary zeal” of the Americans. Borup, Demokratisierungsprozesse, 58. Although Graham-Dixon’s book The Allied Occupation has denazification in its subtitle and two chapters devoted to Schleswig-Holstein, he says nothing about denazification of the peasantry.

Denazification of agriculture certainly prompted heated debate in the second Landtag during the winter of 1946 and 1947.\textsuperscript{162} In this case, political questions did not take a back seat to the immediate needs of survival, even though the winter was harsh and the food crisis was at its worst. Debates revolved round weeding out the “truly guilty” from agriculture. Deputies weighed the pros and cons of accelerating, postponing, or stopping denazification so as not to disrupt farmers’ work.

The second session from December 20, 1946 merits attention. Julius Jürgensen (KPD) addressed the legislature, citing individual cases of “reactionary” farmers’ practices that endangered the food supply (i.e., farmers in Flensburg reported field damage due to the weather but actually harvested and hoarded grain), treated refugee families unfairly (large estate owners in East Holstein were particularly guilty, claimed Jürgensen) and colluded with ex-National Socialist food suppliers to sell butter at exorbitant prices.\textsuperscript{163} In a later debate, Jürgensen claimed that there was no food crisis in the Soviet-occupied zone, although rigorous denazification was in force. There, “competence was not considered separately from one’s political past.”\textsuperscript{164}

The Social Democrats took the podium next, urging the Military Government to accelerate implementation of Control Commission Directive 38, which attempted to unify denazification by categorizing Germans into the guilty (I), compromised (II), slightly compromised (III), those who went along (IV), and those exonerated (V). The most serious punishment farmers faced was expropriation of their farms, but this occurred only in very rare


\textsuperscript{163} Wortprotokolle 2, Schleswig-Holsteinische Landtag [Zweiter ernannter Landtag], p.24-25).

\textsuperscript{164} WP2E 6 Sitzung, 81, 28 March 1947.
instances, such as ex-Gauleiter (regional governor) Hinrich Lohse’s property. Also at stake were the hopes of newly arrived refugees, who wanted farms for themselves. SPD delegate Georg Seeler distinguished between those “misled” (verführt) by the Party and those who actively “terrorized” the population. CDU delegate Friedrich-Wilhelm Lübke supported Seeler in principle. It was easy to agree to the idea of eliminating the “truly guilty,” but this begged the question of exactly who fit this criterion. In any case, Lübke called for a postponement so as not to interrupt food supply. Dr. Hans Ewers from the German Conservative Party (DKP) advocated postponement because the criteria for categorization were unclear. If membership in the NSDAP alone was a decisive criterion, then the outlook for farmers was bleak because many farmers were Party members before 1933.

Given the objections and calls for postponements, Seeler felt moved to take the podium again, aghast that some were ready to “bury” denazification at its inception. He diagnosed an unfortunate tendency of Germans not to “learn from the past” and reminded those present how “entangled” (verstrickt) farmers had been in the movement. Seeler dismissed the idea that denazification would endanger the food supply. Despite the objections lodged against the SPD motion to implement denazification, the motion to categorize citizens passed unanimously in the Landtag.

With the benefit of hindsight, it seems that the sanctity of the food supply in debates on denazification was raised suspiciously often. Leaving the Reich Food Estate largely intact

---

165 Ibid, p.34.
166 Ibid, 37-38.
167 Ibid, 39. The British recognized this tendency as well. Borup cites a report from June 1946 on Husum-Eiderstedt (in the western marshes) that discovered that of 31 farmers in one area, 24 were members of the NSDAP before 1931. Intelligence reports indicated that in areas of Dithmarschen, where “over 90% of property owners are old party members,” farmers closed ranks to dodge denazification sanctions. Borup, Demokratisierungsprozesse, 132.
assumed that it regulated agriculture efficiently and distributed food fairly. However, even
perceptive politicians at the time recognized the difficulty of separating legitimate concerns from
opportunism or outright stonewalling of democratic reform. In a later debate, Erich Arp noted
how the press parroted the excuse of “not endangering food supply” to fend off denazification of
agriculture. He supported Seeler’s claim that following Directive No. 38 would not
deleteriously affect production. It would entail the removal of only a few hundred farmers,
whereas Directive 24, which called for farmers to be replaced by trustee officers (Treuhändler),
would have been much more invasive. Arp criticized the extant farmers’ administration at the
local level (Landesbauernschaft), which he claimed “does not represent farmers at all.” He
argued that those in charge at the village and county level remained in power against farmers’
objections. Implicit in Arp’s claim is that these local officials, either ex-Party members or those
sympathetic to National Socialism, were personae non grata among farmers at large.
Fragmentary archival evidence again prevents generalization, but it seems that the claim that
denazification would seriously disrupt production rather than removing incriminated farmers
from leadership was simply a smokescreen.

The press echoed Landtag debates on removing the “truly” guilty. An article from the
Kieler Nachrichten from the summer of 1946 claimed that the procedure was too schematic. The
author emphasized that not every Party member was a fanatical National Socialist, and that
some people were committed to the ideology without being members. Reorientation
(Umorientierung) toward democracy would take time.

169 Ibid.
170 “Unser Feind: Das Schlagwort. Wie denken Sie über ,Entnazifizierung’” Kieler Nachrichten Nr. 20 (8 June,
1946).
District-level archival records offer our only glimpse at how denazification of agriculture worked. From Plön, ordinances from the district government to heads of the political parties contain instructions on forming denazification committees. The ordinances name those serving on the committees and provide their professions. Because these committees included farmers, they were in a position to pass judgment on their colleagues. These documents also record the rulings. Many farmers were brought before the tribunal, but they were almost never stripped of their land because of a “brown” past. Unfortunately, only the barest biographical information and rulings are recorded rather than the actual proceedings. The British noted that by the end of 1947, the number of farms whose personnel had undergone denazification barely exceeded double digits, although Schleswig-Holstein housed approximately 68,000 farms.

The proceedings certainly had consequences for farmers and agriculture. In a directive from May 10, 1948, the Land government reminded the district agriculture office that “compromised” (belastet) persons were not to be considered among candidates receiving new farm plots at all and that those who “went along” (Mitläufer) were to be considered only after the uncompromised. However, this point was often moot. Many refugees from the east who wished to continue farming in Schleswig-Holstein had few personal records with them attesting to their democratic credentials.

---

171 Verfahren bei der Entnazifizierung (Zusammensetzung des Hauptausschusses), January 12, 1948; Landesarchiv Schleswig Abt. 320.13 (Plön) Nr. 2442.

172 Landesarchiv Schleswig, Abt. 320.13 (Plön), Nr. 2444.

173 Cited by Borup, Demokratisierungsprozesse, 133.

174 LAS Abt. 320.13 (Plön), Nr. 2442, „Hiernach dürfen Belastete bei der Vergebung von Siedlungsland überhaupt nicht und Mitläufer erst im Range nach den politisch unbelasteten Bewerbern berücksichtigt werden.“

175 We may read this in several ways: those arriving from East Prussia, for example, might have included many farmers with a “brown past.” Similar to Schleswig-Holstein, the region was rural, Protestant, and had a strong affinity for National Socialism. Many might have found excuses to dispose of incriminating evidence. However, as
We cannot generalize Plôn’s representativeness for the record of denazification of agriculture. Jessica Jürgens, investigating denazification in the district of Rendsburg, included a section on agriculture. She found that the concentration of cases involving farmers reached its peak in the summer of 1947. Control Commission Directive No. 24 outlined denazification procedures for agriculture, stipulating that persons in important positions in the economy could be excused if they only had nominal membership in the NSDAP.

Denazification in agriculture began on March 8, 1947 in Rendsburg. The committee was instructed not to count early membership in the NSDAP as automatic grounds for deeming farmers “compromised.” Although denazification soon devolved to German hands, the Military Government forbade them from altering procedures dealing with agriculture, indirect evidence that the British considered securing food the top priority.

Everyone knew that the “Old Fighters” had included many farmers. Of the 665 cases spread over twenty meetings, Jürgens found that only three farmers were forbidden from returning to their farms. In general, proceedings against farmers were less strict than those against civil servants, particularly teachers. Social Democrat Adolf Boldt, who chaired the denazification committee in Rendsburg, tried to introduce a fine for farmers who had, for economic reasons, slipped through the proceedings unscathed, but this symbolic measure of Graham-Dixon noted, many were given very short notice of expulsion at the hands of Polish authorities in 1945 and had to make difficult decisions about what to bring with them. The Allied Occupation, passim.


177 Jürgens, „Entnazifizierungspraxis,“ 168.

178 Jürgens, Entnazifizierungspraxis, 169.
“expiation” (*Sühnemaßnahmen*) fell on deaf ears.\(^{179}\) Despite the loophole in Directive No. 24, which allowed farmers to continue working, the committee assigned 66 percent of cases of farmers into Category IV (“so-called Mitläufer”) and 23 percent in Category III (*Minderbelastet*).

Jürgen’s work corroborates the findings for Plön, suggesting that agriculture was not seriously disrupted by denazification, at least in these two districts. This finding casts doubt on Thyssen’s account from the late 1950s, which creates the impression that mass arrests and incarceration of farmers at local levels of power impeded rebuilding administration. He tended to conflate the “automatic arrests” of the summer of 1945 with the process of denazification.

Broader generalizations on denazification in agriculture require caution due to extreme disparities in rates of dismissal from public office. For example, in neighboring Oldenburg to the south, 41 percent of those in the food and agriculture administration were dismissed, whereas only 8 percent of policemen were fired.\(^{180}\) Jürgen’s work on Rendsburg is also noteworthy because this area, particularly the city itself, would soon become the “Green Kremlin” for Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture.\(^{181}\) Denazification indicated reluctance to confront the incontrovertible involvement of agriculture with National Socialism and to strip farmers of their property. Farmers’ vital economic role in the postwar situation overrode past objectionable politics.

The same theme emerges in land reform initiatives implemented at the same time.

Approximately 25 percent of the refugees (280,000 people or approximately 70,000 families)

---

\(^{179}\) Jürgens, „Entnazifizierungspraxis,“ 170.


\(^{181}\) From Erich Thiesen, *Es begann im grünen Kremlin* (Neumünster, 1997). Over the course of the 1950s and 1960s Rendsburg was dubbed the „Green Kremlin“ because it was the nerve center of agrarian policymaking in Schleswig-Holstein and was in communication with Bonn and Brussels on wider issues of agriculture.
who fled to Schleswig-Holstein after World War II had worked in agriculture before 1939, so finding land to continue their livelihood was very important. Given the acute food situation, reforming agriculture to allow more people to supplement their rations seemed logical. Creating new plots would provide work for thousands of people. However, the process of setting aside land for refugees was hindered by Allied intransigence and obstruction from conservatives because of the political and property-rights implications of land redistribution. The end result was driven by private, not governmental, initiative and had modest dimensions.

The “30,000 Hectare Deal” marked the culmination of years of effort to reform agriculture. I focus on Deal as a case study to illustrate the tortuous path to land reform and the modesty of the final outcome. The implications for structural change in agriculture were negligible because few farms and people were involved. In terms of integrating agriculture into the political fabric of the early Federal Republic, the Deal has more to offer. It was being drafted at the same time as the Basic Law, and the issue of protecting private property connected the two. The Basic Law (Grundgesetz) was approved May 8, 1949 and was intended to prevent a dictator from gaining power in Germany. Scholars refrain from calling it a “constitution” because it was provisional at the time, pending the reunification of Germany forty years later. The principles of democracy, social responsibility, and federalism are enshrined in the Basic Law.

Land reform was politicized from an early stage. Erich Arp declared in the Landtag on May 7, 1946 that expropriating large landowners in Schleswig-Holstein was a prerequisite to

---

democratization.\textsuperscript{183} He demanded the economic and political disenfranchisement of this class. The Land’s CDU leadership drew up flyers for the communal and district elections in September and October 1946, pushing for unity across class and professional lines. A CDU flyer addressed to farmers “respected property unconditionally” (\textit{unbedingte Achtung des Eigentums}) but added “in view of the lost war, for social and economic reasons deep interventions (\textit{tiefe Eingriffe}) in everyone’s property is necessary.”\textsuperscript{184} At first, it seemed, even the CDU was prepared to make concessions on this front.

In late September 1946, large estate owners collectively offered the Military Government and the Land government to part with 10,000 hectares of their land.\textsuperscript{185} Their letters went unanswered. Large landowners speculated that the British were interested in forcible, legislated land reform, not a voluntary transaction. Two bills passed in the \textit{Landtag} failed ratification due to British refusal. The first, passed by the first appointed \textit{Landtag}, envisioned a progressive system, whereby farms ranging from farms of 34-40 hectares that would give up 2 percent of their land to operations of 140 hectare, which were to renounce 34 percent of their land.\textsuperscript{186} From their inception, land reform proposals had implications for structural change because “poorly run farms”\textsuperscript{187} were to be included in possible new plots. The second attempt, with agriculture minister Arp at the forefront, passed against CDU opposition in December 1947. It limited the size of farms to 100 hectares and called for compensation for those who stood to lose part of

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{183} Wortprotokoll erster ernannten Landtag, 4 Sitzung (7.5.1946), p.79.
\bibitem{184} Cited by Borup, \textit{Demokratisierungsprozesse}, 97.
\bibitem{186} See Agrar- und Bodenreform in Schleswig-Holstein, September 1946
\bibitem{187} Boyens, \textit{Siedlung und Bodenreform als Aufgabe des Bundes} (Hamburg, 1950), 4.
\end{thebibliography}
their farms. Its declared political goal was to curtail the power of large estate owners, which stoked more controversy than the fact that, if implemented, it would have affected only 654 farms.\(^{188}\) This legislation also undercut British Ordinance No. 103, passed on September 4, 1947, which limited farms to 150 hectares (or valued at 200,000 RM). The more modest British proposal would have affected only 450 farms.

The uphill battle for land reform was initially puzzling due to the political constellation in the postwar period. The SPD emerged as a clear winner in the first free Landtag elections held on April 20, 1947. Voter participation was 70 percent, the highest in the British zone, and the SPD secured 43.8 percent of votes for 43 mandates. Its leadership, noting strong support from refugees, believed it had a mandate to institute land reform to settle them.\(^{189}\)

Characteristically, the next incarnation of land reform legislation was termed “Introductory Measures” to agrarian reform (Gesetz zur Einleitung der Agrarreform). The process bore out the sensitivity of property-ownership and the difficulty of reaching an agreement. Wilhelm Friedrich Boyens, a key figure in the movement for land reform, noted ruefully that between 1945 and 1948, only 275 farms comprising 23,613 hectares had been newly settled.\(^{190}\) After rancorous debate, the bill passed, with thirty-two votes for it and twenty-two against. Delegate F.W. Lübke (CDU) termed the bill a “crime against the community” ˈ(Verbrechen an der Allgemeinheit) and accused those working on it of using “eastern” methods.\(^{191}\)

\(^{188}\) Rosenfedlt, Nicht einer, 87.

\(^{189}\) Rosenfeldt, Nicht einer, 76, notes that the SPD scored strongly in areas heavily populated with refugees.

\(^{190}\) Boyens, Siedlung, 36. Boyens was head of the office for land reform (Amtsleiter für die Boden- und Agrarordnung. In March 1949, he was appointed Commissioner for land reform (Beauftragter für die Bodenreform).

March 1948 efforts did not bear fruit either. In August 1948, the Bauernblatt’s main editorial committee, including president Struve and agriculture chamber president Jensen, took a strong stand against land reform legislation. Struve wrote to both Minister President Lüdemann and to the headquarters of the British Military Government on August 14, 1948, particularly criticizing the clause that set compensation at 30 percent of the farm’s value (Einheitswert).\textsuperscript{192} In his letter to the British Struve cleverly indicated that the planned reform would seriously disrupt food production and delivery. Moreover, he attempted to ingratiate himself with the British, assuming they were not interested in “treating private property with eastern methods” (die östlichen Ansichten). Bauernblatt editors agreed with F.W. Lübke’s Landtag speeches that setting compensation for estate owners at 30 percent amounted to “dispossession without remuneration” (entschädigungslose Enteignung).\textsuperscript{193} The editors wrote that a healthy mixture of large, medium, and small farms was the best model for Schleswig-Holstein. Struve welcomed the chance to integrate refugees and settle them as farmers, but Schleswig-Holsteiners, he declared, must be “fanatically” loyal to the idea of personal property (fanatischer Anhänger des Eigentumsgedankens). The choice of the word “fanatical” is interesting not least because it was a favorite of the National Socialists. The editorial staff of the Bauernblatt suspected that laws such as this would mark the “first step in a moral decline of all tenets in western culture” and warned darkly that it “realized the goals of the SED.”\textsuperscript{194} Erich Arp, after being forced to step down as agriculture minister in January 1948, visited neighboring Mecklenburg in the Soviet occupation zone to observe the state of agriculture there. He criticized the collectivization but nevertheless

\textsuperscript{192} Bundesarchiv Koblenz, B 116 Nr. 1172 (Bundesministerium für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten). Bodenreform in der britischen Zone – Schleswig-Holstein, an Herrn Ministerpräsident Lüdemann und Herrn Brigadie Helby, 14.8.1948.

\textsuperscript{193} Das Bauernblatt, (August 1948), 1.

\textsuperscript{194} Ibid, p.6.
found many aspects of reform worthy of emulation.\textsuperscript{195} Government efforts to realize land reform had come to a screeching halt in Schleswig-Holstein.

In this situation, the offer of the Working Group for Landowners (AdG) in Kiel of 30,000 hectares of land came at the right time.\textsuperscript{196} Discussions between the Working Group and the Land government stretched from fall 1948 into spring 1949. In a meeting on October 14, 1948, the owners’ representatives requested that the price paid for their land should cancel out their burden in the Equalization Law (\textit{Lastenausgleich}).\textsuperscript{197} Erich Arp’s successor, Bruno Diekmann, worked diligently on this deal. He had at least one ally in the CDU, F.W. Lübke, but most farmers were hostile.\textsuperscript{198} From January through March 1949, Boyens met with the AdG to discuss the parameters of the transaction. At roughly the same time, in Bonn the Basic Law was being drafted. Article 14, protecting private property, was the key issue affecting land reform. Its wording would mean the difference between encouraging or discouraging reform in Schleswig-Holstein.\textsuperscript{199} Land owners now had legal recourse should the Land government confiscate their land. Thus, it comes as no surprise that most large landowners were dilatory in filling out the obligatory registration forms with the government.

The AdG submitted its offer in writing to the government on April 13, 1949. The proposal had the following key points. The transaction was based on each estate’s tax value (\textit{Einheitswert}). They guaranteed that 30,000 hectares of land would be transferred but reserved

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{195} Rosenfeldt, \textit{Nicht einer}, 94.

\textsuperscript{196} Arbeitsgemeinschaft des Grundbesitzes e.V., or AdG.


\textsuperscript{198} Volquardsen, “Zur Agrarreform,” 249. Lübke was perhaps more favorably disposed because the initiative stemmed from private hands, not the government.

\textsuperscript{199} Volquardsen, “Zur Agrarreform,” 248.
\end{footnotesize}
the right to determine what type of land from which estates would be involved. By accepting the offer, the government was supposed to renounce plans to radically transform land holdings and curtail large landowners’ economic sway. In cabinet meetings, Bruno Diekmann highlighted the fact that no future distinction between large and small landowners would exist, which was the most important point. The property owners entered the deal with the understanding that they would not be discriminated against (keine Nachteile) in regard to the Equalization Law (Lastenausgleich).

On May 14, 1949, the government accepted the proposal, but the negotiations involving compensating estate owners were extraordinarily complicated. The planned turnover of the land was scheduled for July 1, 1949, thus falling within the agricultural fiscal year, but forcing Boyens and other officials to scramble to work out the particulars. The deal only laid out general guidelines, and it did not regulate the individual contracts of estate owners. Writing soon after the events, Boyens claimed that in the atmosphere of expectation for federal guidelines and given the lack of funds following the currency reform, no one really thought the turnover of land would occur. The two main companies involved in the transaction were the Schleswig-Holsteinische Landgesellschaft in Kiel and the Ostholsteinische Landsiedlung in Eutin, and they divided the 10,000 hectares of land that was ready for immediate settlement between themselves for redistribution.

Meanwhile, the Basic Law was passed on May 8, 1949 and went into force on May 23. The deal in Schleswig-Holstein was sealed before this occurred. From November 1949 to April

---

200 LAS 605, Kabinettsprotokoll 2, May 11, 1949.

201 Boyens, Siedlung, 38.
1950, land from fifty-six estates and sixteen leased operations (*Zeitpachtdörfer*), totaling 30,000 hectares of land, were transferred. The transaction cost 28 million DM.\textsuperscript{202}

J. Volkert Volquardsen, noted expert on land reform in Schleswig-Holstein, concluded that from the original grand plans for settlement, in the end one was left with a “public gesture of goodwill” (*einer öffentlichen Geste des guten Willens*). Of the 70,000 hopeful families, only 2,800 could be settled.\textsuperscript{203} Nevertheless, Volquardsen judged the deal to be a success. From 1949 to 1951, only 1,394 plots with 8,686 hectares of land were created as a result of the land reform program.\textsuperscript{204} Frank Lubowitz believed that the deal represented not a response to dire social need but a small scale transaction in which large landowners got a good price.\textsuperscript{205} Jenspeter Rosenfeldt believes that Erich Arp’s resignation as agriculture minister and Theodor Steltzer’s exit from the *Landtag* signaled the end of cooperation between the CDU and SPD in land reform.\textsuperscript{206} He lamented that failed land reform was a missed opportunity for democratization. In July 1950, Dr. Boyens finished his manuscript on land reform in Schleswig-Holstein and submitted a copy to *Landrat* Lübke in Schleswig.\textsuperscript{207} Boyens’s stated goal in his cover letter to Lübke was to publish the book “in order to get some leeway from Bonn” (*um etwas Luft gegenüber Bonn zu bekommen*). Writing soon after the event, Boyens believed that the landowners demonstrated “remarkable objectivity and a sense of *Realpolitik*”\textsuperscript{208} in carrying out the deal. Similar to

\textsuperscript{202} Boyens, *Siedlung*, 42.

\textsuperscript{203} Kluge, *Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins*, 686.

\textsuperscript{204} Rosenfeldt, *Nicht einer*, 102.

\textsuperscript{205} Lubowitz, „Die parlamentarischen Auseinandersetzungen,“ 180.

\textsuperscript{206} Rosenfeldt, *Nicht einer*, 136.

\textsuperscript{207} Kreisarchiv Schleswig-Flensburg Abt. J4 Nr. 16. Manuskript von Dr. Wilhelm Friedrich Boyens.

\textsuperscript{208} Boyens, *Siedlung*, 36.
Volquardsen, he deemed land reform a success. An expert in settlement and a proponent of land reform, Boyens nevertheless tended to be on the side of landowners. Perhaps they believed that long drawn out legal proceedings forcibly taking their land would discredit them. Partly as a consequence of the poor result of the deal, the SPD fared poorly in rural areas in the first election of the 1950s. Many refugees who had previously pinned their hopes on the SPD as the party for land reform now turned to the BHE.\footnote{Sachs, “Die Landtagswahl am 09.07.1950,” \textit{Statistische Monatshefte Schleswig-Holstein} 2 Nr.1 (1950), 316-317.}

In hindsight, the painfully slow process of land reform from 1945 to 1949 was futile. Although settling people on farms in 1945 seemed to serve multiple needs (i.e., more food, more jobs, and strengthened agriculture), by the late 1940s, there was less interest in agriculture. When they could, refugees moved to higher-paying industrial jobs in the Ruhr. The small size of farms created by settlement firms may have prompted many to seek other careers and places to live.\footnote{Friedrich-Wilhelm Henning, \textit{Landwirtschaft und ländliche Gesellschaft in Deutschland} vol.2 (1750-1976) (Paderborn, 1978), 262.} I believe the “30,000-hectare Deal” illustrates the still considerable sway large farmers enjoyed in Schleswig-Holstein in the late 1940s. They deigned to “offer” land to landless refugees and farm laborers in a patriarchal manner. A movement for land reform and resettlement had also arisen in the aftermath of World War I, but it similarly soon fell victim to the forces for restoration. In the aftermath of World War II, politically-motivated land reform failed to result in economic restructuring of agriculture.

\section{2.5 Conclusion}

The sorry state of agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein in 1945 exacerbated economic chaos. Neither initiatives to alter structures (government, agricultural self-administration) nor thorough democratization (land redistribution and denazification) were top priorities. The years from 1945...
to 1949 were an interregnum in terms of economic policy, political allegiance, and even moral sensibilities.

The reconstruction of agricultural self-administration was a product of historical experience and contemporary exigency. Instead of a complete break with the Third Reich, British and German authorities struck compromises. Organizations such as the Reich Food Estate continued to function, albeit in a much more circumscribed form under Allied supervision. The agricultural chamber, a traditional feature of Schleswig-Holstein’s self-government, was envisioned as the legal, democratized equivalent to the National Socialist precursor. By including farm labor and consumers’ representatives, it did attempt to encompass a wider cross-section of society than previously. Farmers helped revive civil society by founding the Farmers’ Association according to democratic principles. Such organizations had lost many members during the Weimar Republic and were formally abolished in the Third Reich. The organization’s rhetoric admitted past mistakes, and expressed a commitment, in theory, to party-political neutrality and avoided partisanship. However, the same people involved in founding the Farmers Association were also involved in founding the CDU. The early contacts between the Association and this political party quickly brought most farmers into its fold. “Men of the first hour,” such as Detlef Struve, emerged as intermediaries between conservative politics and agriculture, but conservative politics now was not anti-democratic and sought to cross over confessional and class lines.

Denazification of Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture did not brush aside political questions for reasons of the food crisis so easily. Landtag debates reminded unwilling listeners of the deep connection between the rise of National Socialism and the peasantry in Schleswig-Holstein.
Land reform tended to protect property rights, even during the brief Social Democratic tenure of power in the late 1940s.
3. Integration into the Social Market Economy (1949-1955)

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines developments in Schleswig-Holstein in relationship to broader developments in agricultural policy at the federal level during the early years of the Federal Republic. It first examines the flurry of “market regulation laws” (Marktordnungsgesetze) passed in late 1950 and early 1951, which marked the transition from a controlled economy to the social market economy. The social market economy and its idea of a better standard of living for everyone (Wohlstand für alle) took pride of place in Christian Democratic policies. Determining how agriculture influenced the actualization of this ideological goal is essential because agriculture was an important source of support for the CDU. The key realization from this period is that price relationships (Preisverhältnisse), not the absolute prices farmers received for their produce, were decisive, which demonstrates farmers’ growing awareness that their income and profit were not the only measures of healthy agriculture. Integration into the social market economy meant observing the relationships of prices to each other, which in turn meant acknowledging consumers’ viewpoints.

However, as the second section will demonstrate, the intention of agricultural legislation to balance consumer and producer interests was not conflict-free. The so-called “Milk War” of 1951 provides an example of the political, economic and social consequences of structural
change in Schleswig-Holstein’s dairy industry. Agronomists and farm lobbyists later drew upon
lessons from this episode when promulgating the federal Agriculture Law of 1955, which
Constantin von Dietze called the “Magna Carta” of German farm legislation. This law (one of
whose architects was Detlef Struve, Schleswig-Holstein’s most prominent farm politician)
marked the culmination of efforts to integrate farmers into the social market economy, ensure
they were part of the “economic miracle,” and set the tone of future agrarian policy by
enshrining the “family farm” as the basic unit of West German agriculture.

3.2 Market Regulation Laws

A transition from crisis to stability in agriculture occurred from the late 1940s to the mid-
1950s. By 1949, agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein appeared to have turned the corner. The years
of crisis from 1945 to 1948 gave way to stabilization, integration, and arguably the “golden
years” of agricultural productivity from 1949 to 1959. Even the weather seemed to promise
recovery. In contrast to the severe winter of 1946-47 and the record drought of 1947, the
following years proved temperate and boasted bountiful harvests.

However, these positive developments were overshadowed by larger issues. In the
context of the Cold War, particularly the Berlin Blockade (1948-49) and Korean War (1950-53),
officials in the West German government regarded agricultural overproduction as a safety net.¹
Commodity prices rose sharply, despite the government’s eagerness to stimulate production
while maintaining stable prices for agricultural goods, particularly during Wilhelm Niklas’
tenure as Federal Agriculture Minister (1949-1953).² A government statement issued by

¹ Ulrich Kluge, “Veredelungswerkstatt,” 49.
² Ulrich Kluge, “Wandel ohne Erschütterung. Staatliche Agrarpolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949 bis
ländliche Gesellschaft, 261, 273-77; Kluge, Vierzig Jahre vol.1, 111-24, 208. It should be noted that Hans Schlange-
Chancellor Adenauer on September 20, 1949 listed four agricultural priorities: dismantling the control economy (Zwangswirtschaft), increasing production, reducing imports, and boosting livestock husbandry (Veredelungswirtschaft).³ One of Adenauer’s stated aims in maximizing production was to reduce the use of precious foreign currency reserves to buy food.⁴ According to a report written in June 1950 by agricultural experts in the Kieler Institut für Weltwirtschaft, a certain “mild pressure or legislative force” (milden Druck oder gesetzlichen Zwang) was necessary to push farmers in Schleswig-Holstein to produce more in view of the ending of Marshall Plan aid.⁵ The widening price gap between what farmers needed (tools, machines, fertilizer) and produced became a major issue as a result of the currency reform. Agricultural produce was still under price controls, whereas the prices of industrial goods were allowed to float.

In principle, those in production, trade, and processing could easily agree to Adenauer’s further commitment to “preserving a healthy agriculture,” but in practice the difficulty was balancing farmers’ interest in stable prices with consumers’ interest in affordable food. In his statement, Adenauer was committed to implementing social market principles in a non-dogmatic fashion, that is, allowing the laws of supply and demand to operate while not allowing the economically disadvantaged to suffer. This idea left considerable latitude for interpretation. Consumers were indeed learning the principles of economics. A.J. Nicholls notes that in a survey from March 1949, most people thought eggs should be distributed at a fixed price rather than

---

³ Kluge, 40 Jahre vol.I, 87.
sold freely at higher prices. By October 1948, rationing on potatoes was lifted, and by April 1950, the last rationing ended. Rationing had barely ended when the government considered price caps on certain staples. Consumers and producers seized upon the murky concept of “just” (gerecht) or “commensurate” (angemessen) prices. These terms would become staples in the agrarian lobby’s rhetoric throughout the Federal Republic. With national sovereignty, permission to enter trade agreements, and entry into the world economy, the nation’s agriculture faced difficult questions about prices. On the teeter-totter of sustaining “healthy” agriculture while not neglecting consumer interests, the government planned to use price as the fulcrum, but price was precisely what was difficult to balance.

It is important to contextualize market laws in Land politics. The SPD had formed the government for the previous three years (1947-1950), but a new CDU coalition government was elected in the Landtag elections on July 9, 1950. The federal government became a coalition of CDU/CSU, Free Democrats (FDP), and German party (DP), just as the Schleswig-Holstein government was. This change marked an important caesura in the Land’s postwar history, beginning a nearly forty-year period of successive CDU administrations. Given Christian Democratic power, market laws reflected intense lobbying to ensure the best deal for farmers. Instead of land reform, which the last chapter described as an important SPD policy from 1946 to 1949, protection of the “family farm” and “just” prices preoccupied the CDU. A campaign poster for the 1953 Bundestag election depicts this phenomenon (see Figure 1).

---


9 Borup, *Demokratisierungsprozesse*, 246.
The CDU emerged as the strongest party in the Land only after it had absorbed large groups of voters who had previously opted for short-lived postwar phenomena like the League of Expellees and those Deprived of Rights (BHE) and the South Schleswig Voting Union (SSV), a Danish minority party. Allan Borup has told the story of this absorption.\textsuperscript{10} Irredentists were de-radicalized by way of the Law for Equalization of Burdens (\textit{Lastenausgleichsgesetz}), which passed on August 14, 1952. Schleswig-Holstein farmers often complained about the taxes and dues resulting from this legislation, but the law helped put many refugees and expellees back on their feet, robbing the BHE of its electorate.

\textsuperscript{10} Borup, \textit{Demokratisierungsprozesse}. 
Certainly the leader of the Farmers’ Association, Detlef Struve, was an advocate of such “politics by coalition” (Sammlungspolitik). He saw the cooperation among CDU, DP, and FDP as a long-term project. He envisioned this Deutscher Wahlblock as a “unified, non-Marxist union bedeviled by neither delusions of political grandeur (großen Politik) nor apathy (Parteimüdigkeit).” He regretted that “a coalition obvious for everyone” (klare Sammlung) had not been on the agenda for the July 1950 election, but declared “politics is also about being steadfast (Beharrlichkeit). We must not lose sight of the goal of coalition building.” Like Hans Schlange-Schöningen, Struve was a consensus politician.

Allan Borup correctly describes the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein during the early 1950s as a “party of notables” (Honoratiorenpartei). Men like Detlef Struve, whose large family (which could even be called a “clan”) branched out into the local community and were highly respected, according to a British intelligence report. By successfully co-opting such figures, the CDU could render local politics “respectable” again after the failure of Weimar and catastrophe of National Socialism. In addition to shifts in politics at the federal and Land levels, a new path was found in economics. The sociologist and economist Alfred Müller-Armack (1901-1978) was among those most responsible for codifying the principles of the “social market economy” and popularizing it. This economic philosophy essentially represented the “third way” between liberal capitalism and command-style communism. He wished to link the “principle of free markets with social responsibility” (Prinzip der Freiheit auf dem Markte mit dem sozialen

12 Ibid.
13 Borup, Demokratisierungsprozesse, 235-240.
Ausgleichs).\textsuperscript{15} Although never officially recognized as the government’s economic credo, Adenauer’s Economics Minister Ludwig Erhard (1897-1977) realized the social market economy. A Social Democrat, Karl Schiller, actually coined the most succinct statement about the social market economy, saying that it was “as much competition as possible, as much planning as necessary” (*Wettbewerb so viel wie möglich, Planung so viel wie nötig*).\textsuperscript{16}

Although the ideas behind the social market economy were devised in the interwar period, after 1945, the two most important priorities were currency reform and freeing prices to open the market.\textsuperscript{17} In May 1948, Müller-Armack published a pamphlet listing necessary actions. He called for allowing the western zone to enter trade negotiations with other countries, stabilizing the currency, creating a central bank, halting the dismantling of industry, introducing social security, and lowering taxes.\textsuperscript{18} Wilhelm Niklas’ deputy in the federal agriculture ministry, Theodor Sonnemann, translated this into agricultural terms in October 1948:

A completely open market would mean a free-for-all in agriculture and would ruin markets and price relationships. The golden mean is best. We would like to replace state control with a structured agriculture we would help shape.\textsuperscript{19}

To simplify, as the result of Erhard’s economic policies, a split or schizophrenic economy developed in the western zone. Deregulation of industrial products led to soaring prices for farm requisites (machines, tools, fertilizer, and wages). Given that Erhard’s ideas opposed state planning and bureaucratic controls, it was inevitable that he would clash with Hans Schlange-

\textsuperscript{15} Alfred Müller-Armack, *Wirtschaftsordnung und Wirtschaftspolitik. Studien und Konzepte zur sozialen Marktwirtschaft und zur europäischen Integration* (Freiburg, 1966), 243.

\textsuperscript{16} Nicholls, *Freedom with Responsibility*, 317. See the next section for Schiller’s participation in the “Milk War.”

\textsuperscript{17} Nicholls, *Freedom with Responsibility*, 129.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid, 143.

Schöningen and the British tendency toward planning. There were attempts to bring agriculture within the orbit of the principles of the social market economy and to close the price scissors (the gap between the costs of agriculture and the prices farmers got for their goods). For example, farm lobbies spearheaded by Friedrich Wilhelm Lübke in Schleswig-Holstein suggested selling agricultural surpluses at market prices once quotas at fixed prices had been met. ²⁰ However, the SPD feared the slippery slope of deregulation and Schlange-Schöningen thought the system would spin out of control. Although they worried about Erhard’s deregulation “under American inspiration,”²¹ the British were nevertheless pessimistic about their ability to steer economic developments in agriculture or any other sector. The “split system,” whereby some staples were rigidly controlled while others were allowed to float, was continued in July 1950 when a special type of bread (Konsumbrot) was introduced at a fixed price, whereas other bread prices were allowed to fluctuate. Thus, the two-tiered economic approach of the Federal Republic, symbolized by the quite popular Konsumbrot, manifested its commitment to social peace and economic stability.

As the food crisis in Germany abated, farmers and consumers faced new challenges. Because the first quarter of 1950 brought a drop in the prices for eggs, milk, and pork, farm associations’ requests for direct price support grew more insistent.²² After bearing the heavy responsibility of averting famine after World War II, German agriculture was now in need of protection from the world market. The Market Regulation Laws were an attempt to fit a round peg in a square hole, attempting to somehow bring agricultural policy in alignment with the social market economy. Starting in November 1949, two expert panels (Gutachten) convened to

²⁰ Farquharson, The Western Allies, 213.
²¹ Farquharson, The Western Allies, 216.
²² Hohenstein, Bauernverbände, 261.
determine how agriculture was to function in the economy. Group A was comprised of such respected figures as Constantin von Dietze and labor union representatives, who expressed grave misgivings about regulating basic foodstuffs, which would contradict the principles of free competition. The other panel, Group B, was made up of officials from federal and state agricultural bureaus, such as Konrad Langenheim in Kiel, who thought that the initial conditions were not ripe for agriculture to compete in the market. Although the slogan “competition vs. protectionism” (Wettbewerb oder Agrarschutz)\(^{23}\) dominated public discourse, Group A did not propose *laissez-faire* competition, nor did Group B advocate state control. An article in the *Schleswig-Holsteinische Landpost* from May 1949 relayed the complex calculations the experts in Group A undertook to balance consumers’ and producers’ wishes.\(^{24}\) In addition, farmers reading this article would have learned about the proposal to create import centers (Importsausgleichstellen) whose purpose was to keep the domestic market free of price fluctuations (Preisschwankungen vom inneren Markt ferzuhalten). The panels met for twelve sessions and published their findings on March 1, 1950. Although the proposals from Group B won the day,\(^{25}\) the farm lobby’s coverage of the other panel’s proposals is balanced, suggesting that the lobby was not lopsided in favor of protection.

As a result, the CDU initiated legislation for the regulation of grain, dairy, meat, fats, and sugar on December 12, 1949.\(^{26}\) Legislation for market regulation passed relatively quickly for grain and fodder (November 4, 1950), sugar (January 5, 1951), milk and fats (February 28, 1951), and meat (April 25, 1951). Price was the driving factor in agrarian policy during the first


\(^{25}\) Kluge, *40 Jahre* vol.I, 118, claims that Niklas favored Group B from the outset.

Adenauer cabinet. Whether higher or lower than domestic prices, world prices were not to affect those at home, and domestic over-production was not to drive prices down.

Agriculture Minister Niklas wrote a book explaining the purpose and functioning of the Market Regulation Laws. Interestingly, he believed one of the lessons from recent German history was that the state had an obligation to control agriculture sufficiently to meet the population’s needs during crisis.\textsuperscript{27} Niklas’ justifications for regulating certain agricultural products merit attention. He went to considerable lengths to explain agriculture’s relative disadvantage compared to industry and Germany’s disadvantages compared to other countries. Apparently “mother nature” could not be rushed. However, as we saw in the last chapter, the British-sponsored land conversion scheme (\textit{Grünlandumbruch}) could achieve some success in only a few years. Even more remarkably, Niklas asserted that (West) Germany’s climate and geography fared poorly in comparison to the “superiority of the virgin soil in the New World” (\textit{Die Überlegenheit der jungfräulichen Böden der Neuen Welt}).\textsuperscript{28} He had the temerity to note the damage German agriculture had suffered during the war, conveniently ignoring whatever depredations agricultures in other countries, such as Holland, France, and northern Italy, had suffered from German occupiers. Niklas reasoned that because farmers could not control climate and many aspects of production, the state needed to level the playing field against world competition. The refrain in agrarian circles was “price parity,” particularly after the currency reform, and government intervention was supposed to guarantee it.

Detlef Struve repeated Niklas’ argument that agriculture stood at a disadvantage compared to other branches of industry at the \textit{Land} level. Speaking on the Northwest German Radio (\textit{Nordwestdeutschen Rundfunk}) on January 6, 1951, he explained that Schleswig-Holstein

\textsuperscript{27} Niklas, \textit{Sorgen um das tägliche Brot}, 148.

\textsuperscript{28} Niklas, \textit{Sorgen}, 148.
was relatively far from markets, such as major cities in the Ruhr (ein ausgesprochen marktfernes Land). Agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein suffered due to transportation taxes and tolls. He urged that special tax breaks be considered.

The market regulation laws demonstrate continuities in agrarian policymaking. The quest for autarky in the Third Reich became “self-sufficiency” in the Federal Republic. Import and stocking boards (Einfuhr- und Vorratsstellen) were established that guaranteed prices, controlled imports, and stockpiled certain staples. They functioned like locks for ships passing through canals. If world prices were lower, then the state would subsidize domestically produced equivalents to enable sale on the world market. The Federal government stated on October 17, 1949 that such import and stocking centers would not discriminate against certain countries’ food exports into West Germany, which would violate the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT). Although the stockpiling aspect of these centers served a sensible function in crises such as the Berlin blockade or Korean War, they became centers to remove goods from the market to keep produce prices in accord with farmers’ wishes. In short, they bought and stored domestic overproduction as a method of price support. As Robert Cecil accurately summarized, “the state, in effect, made up the difference between the world price and the domestic price.”

Although the grain law passed first in late summer 1950 and served as a model for subsequent legislation on other staples, I focus on the milk and dairy product regulation because

29 “Ungelöste Schleswig-holsteinische Agrarprobleme,” Das Bauernblatt, 6 January 1951, p.4
30 See Henning, Landwirtschaft vol.2, 275 for a chart on how this functioned.
31 Niklas, Sorgen, 156.
32 By the early 1970s, “butter mountains” were taken out of the market and stored in these facilities at taxpayer expense. Henning, Landwirtschaft, vol.2, 275.
it involved more state intervention and, as the following section illustrates, generated conflict. Länder set producer and consumer prices, the fat content, processing fees, and trade margins. The federal government, particularly the Economics Ministry, could set certain guidelines (Richtlinien) in this regard. As Ulrich Kluge noted, the resemblance to Weimar-era agrarian legislation was unmistakable. The law from July 31, 1930 set a precedent by calling for the government to ensure the safety of milk consumption. Reminiscent of Weimar regulations, the legislation comprised detailed provisions for pasteurization, correct storage, and timely distribution of milk to prevent spoilage. However, differences existed. One provision that had implications for any future disputes stipulated that the Länder were authorized to set prices and trade margins and could, if desired, call upon the federal government to intervene. Organizations for the production, processing, and distribution of dairy products could band together at the Land level to form Marktgemeinschaften. Because these included consumers’ representatives and membership was voluntary, the Marktgemeinschaften were neither cartels nor “corporatist” in the sense of collusion between government and production at the expense of consumers.34 The vertical organization of the dairy industry was meant to facilitate delivery to urban centers, such as Hamburg, complex work in the early days of refrigeration. Subsidizing grain and milk prices became fixtures in West German agrarian politics.

The similarity to Weimar-era legislation is important because it suggests continuity in dealing with agrarian issues. Lobbyists and politicians looked to the past for guidance, even though circumstances were quite different. This mentality complicated the adjustment to contemporary demands.

34 Nicholls, Freedom with Responsibility, 7.
In sum, Niklas tried to explain the legislation as a synthesis between regulation and the free market (Synthese zwischen Marktordnung und freier Marktwirtschaft).35 This hybrid character of agricultural legislation mimicked the social market economy itself, which was intended to forge a third way between capitalism and a command economy. Scholars more recently have come closer to the mark, observing that the complicated market regulation system basically lifted agriculture out of competition.36 This effect was similar to the Third Reich’s attempt to shield agriculture from the world market.

In the initial post-war years, increasing agricultural production was the top priority, food was rationed, and food prices were capped to cope with the terrible economic conditions. When agriculture and the economy began to recover, the United States and Erhard wanted to transition to a free market economy, and Adenauer wanted an agricultural surplus. However, with agricultural overproduction and overseas imports, these changes would have meant a disastrous drop in prices for German agriculture. Therefore, a price-support system incorporated under the aegis of the “social market economy” put a floor under agricultural prices rather than capping them as before. Niklas and others attempted to demonstrate that agriculture was part of the social market economy, but agriculture was actually protected. Borrowing from Weimar-era legislation set a precedent for entitlement culture among agronomists. It would make it too easy for farmers to become bullies during conflict resolution. Moreover, price support was now understood in a more economically sophisticated framework of “parity,” not simply price-fixing.

3.3 The Milk War of 1951

35 Niklas, Sorgen, 161.

Although the passage of the milk and fats law in December 1950 may well have been “parliamentary routine,” actual implementation was a different story. Battlefronts hardened between the city senate in Hamburg and dairy organizations in Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony in the summer of 1951. The conflict first erupted when city officials refused to raise the price of drinking milk in accordance with farmers’ wishes and federal allowances. It was a significant postwar test of farmers’ acceptance of democracy and adherence to its “rules.” The episode also foreshadowed national legislation that attempted to link agriculture to the “economic miracle.”

To provide the reader a sense of the scale of the potential conflict between city and countryside during the “Milk War,” a Hamburg newspaper reported that seventy-two dairies supplied the 1.6 million residents with 12 million liters of milk a month. Günther Thiede, writing in early 1951, noted that approximately one-third of Schleswig-Holstein’s agricultural income stemmed from the dairy industry and that its net worth (Produktionswert) made it the biggest sector of the economy. In some districts, the milk industry provided half of farmers’ income.

Farmers in northern Germany felt strong enough to threaten or actually impose a delivery strike because they thought they had backing from the highest quarter. On February 12, Chancellor Adenauer met with leading farm politicians in Rhöndorf to discuss federal and Land

37 Kluge, 40 Jahre vol.I, 121.

38 Haburger Abendblatt 4 Nr. 173 (27 July 1951).


40 For example, in Pinneberg; Jung, Bauern oder Unternehmer, 105.
policies. Those in attendance, including federal ministers Niklas and Erhard, agreed that the family farm was to remain the fundamental unit of West German agriculture. Furthermore, they deemed the milk price critical for agriculture’s viability (Rentabilität). Adenauer promised that the federal government would do all it could to ensure that the price farmers got for their products would be commensurate with the production costs. That is, the federal government would work to establish parity between prices and incomes for agriculture and other sectors of the economy. Although Adenauer spoke freely throughout the meeting, he read a prepared statement about “parity,” a hint at the complexity of the issue. He further acknowledged the central importance of grain and milk prices for the viability of family farms. In the lead article for that issue of Das Bauernblatt, Chief Editor Johannes Eichmeier interpreted Adenauer’s promises as “proof that the state has assumed unilateral responsibility for agrarian policy.” Adenauer’s statements and promises were important because, later that summer, farmers called upon these to ask the federal government to arbitrate between state governments and agriculture in the conflict over raising milk prices. The farm organizations from both Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein pinned great hopes to Adenauer’s promises, although there was an undertone of concern that he did not specify a concrete plan for how to achieve price parity between industry and agriculture.

41 Bundesarchiv Koblenz, B 116 Nr. 36278, Niederschrift Rhöndorfer Gespräche 17.2.1951.

42 „Der Bundeskanzler sprach zur Landwirtschaft,” Das Bauernblatt, 5 Nr. 8 (February 24, 1951), 177.


45 See Hohenstein, Bauernverbände, 309-310. From 1949 until the early summer of 1954 when parliamentary discussions for an agriculture law began, the federal government, particularly Adenauer himself, veered toward...
Although members of the Farmers’ Association participating in the Rhöndorf meeting could not know it at the time, the meeting helped them articulate a position that would culminate in the passage of the Agriculture Law of 1955. Shortly after the meeting, the Association passed a memorandum calling for “a profitable agricultural price level by way of a parity system.” Creating a system to align costs and prices was one of the main motivations in passing the law. At the meeting, the chairman of the price committee in the German Farmers’ Association (DBV) declared that one of the lobby’s priorities was a comprehensive agriculture law (einheitlichen Agrarrechts). There was a clear link between the milk war and the 1955 Agriculture Law.

After the Rhöndorf meeting, legislation regulating the prices for milk and fats passed. Prices for drinking milk were set by the state, whereas market prices were allowed more influence on prices for butter, cheese, and other dairy products. Dairies that concentrated on producing drinking milk were supposed to pay a fee (Ausgleichsabgabe) to benefit dairies that processed milk into butter and cheese (Werkmilchmeiereien), a less profitable venture. Sections 8 and 18 of the Milk and Fats Law granted Land governments the authority to set prices with the proviso that the federal economics minister could set guidelines in the event of price disagreements. Section 13 called for farmers, processors, and consumer advocates to form dairy organizations on a voluntary basis. Such conglomerates aimed to streamline the production, pricing, distribution, and delivery of milk, while ensuring that all interested parties could exercise their right of co-determination. In Schleswig-Holstein, such a union (Landesvereinigung


47 B 116 Nr. 36278, Niederschrift.

48 Gesetz über den Verkehr mit Milch, Milcherzeugnissen und Fett (February 28, 1951), Bundesgesetzblatt Nr. 10 (2 March 1951), 135-141.
The “Milk War” did not erupt from nowhere. As early as October 1949, bipartisan suggestions from CDU and SPD committee members in the Federal Ministry for Agriculture advocated food stamps (Verbilligungsscheine) so low-income families (minderbemittelten) could purchase milk.52 During committee meetings in the winter of 1949 and spring of 1950, dairy prices were debated, but the committee postponed its decision. Members of the SPD were adamant that raising prices was off the table because it would burden consumers.53

At an agriculture committee meeting in Bonn in April 1950, Federal Minister Niklas was convinced that the main problem in milk prices was farmers’ “panic.”54 Concern existed that surplus butter could not be properly stored or that storage could not be financed, which would drive down milk prices. Although Niklas preferred for each Land to design its own solution, he

49 “Landesvereinigung der Milchwirtschaft gegründet,” Das Bauernblatt 5 Nr. 101 (June 30, 1951), 366.

50 Thiesen, Es begann im Grünen Kreml, 24-25.

51 Its expert reviews (Gutachten) later published plans to improve dairy farming (Strukturpläne zur Verbesserung der Milchwirtschaft), and provided services in technological questions, sales, marketing, and so on. See 3.2 and 3.3 below.

52 LAS Abt. 605 Nr. 2330, Auszug aus dem Kurzprotokoll der 3.Sitzung des Ausschusses für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten am 27. Oktober in Bonn.


proposed raising the fee (Ausgleichsabgabe) that drinking-milk dairies paid to support milk-processing centers by 2 Pfennige and to skim off one Pfennig for every liter of delivered milk to finance butter storage. Although the Schleswig-Holstein delegation agreed to the proposal, they thought that the price for milk should drop for seasonal reasons. Cows produced more during the summer. The “milk subsidy” (Milchpfennig) became a fixture in agrarian policy and debate over the next decades.

The spark that ignited the “Milk War” came in early May after the federal government agreed to raise milk prices to 38 Pfg/L for milk with 2.8 percent fat. In mid-June, Hamburg price agencies refused to countenance raising the price from 34 Pfg/L to 38 Pfg/L. Shortly thereafter, Bremen price agencies followed suit. Two “fronts” formed in the “Milk War:” the farming organizations of Lower Saxony and the city of Bremen on the one hand and Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture and Hamburg on the other. In the first case, a delivery boycott was implemented in early August, whereas in the latter a boycott was never more than a threat. Contrasting personalities and leadership styles of the Lower Saxon farm leader Rehwinkel and his counterpart Struve in Schleswig-Holstein were notable. The former was, according to Erich Thiesen, more of a provocateur or a showman rooted in the chauvinist agrarian politics of the Weimar era. Struve was less gifted as a public speaker, but he was a consensus politician. Konrad Adenauer trusted him. In a letter from August 1947 to Hans Schlange-Schöningen, for

55 LAS Abt. 605 Nr. 2330 has a copy of the note from the Federal Minister for Agriculture to the Bundestag regarding the milk price.

56 Das Bauernblatt 5 Nr. 24 (June 16, 1951), 45.

57 Interview with Erich Thiesen, May 27, 2012. Thiesen was the long-time editor of the Bauernblatt and knew both men personally.
example, Adenauer referred to Struve as “the gentleman from Schleswig-Holstein.” Adenauer deemed Struve as one of the more “energetic” (tüchtig) and politically interested members of the CDU and recommended his membership in the Frankfurt Economic Council. Struve got the job.

Farmers’ reaction to urban stubbornness was not long in coming. On June 29, an important meeting was held in the town of Pinneberg on the outskirts of Hamburg, which was attended by members of both the Lower Saxon Landvolk and Schleswig-Holstein’s Farmer’s Association. Delegates made three decisions, which were published on the front page of the Bauernblatt. They asked respective chairmen of farmer’s groups in Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein, and Lower Saxony to negotiate milk prices with Hamburg Mayor Max Brauer, to investigate sales and production options for dairies in areas other than drinking milk, and to “consider ways of cutting off Hamburg from meat (both beef and pork) as well as to redirect earnings of animal feed to local firms.” Approximately 800 to 1,400 people attended, with Detlef Struve presiding. Ministerial Director Konrad Langenheim from Kiel also attended. In his opening remarks, Struve noted the conspicuous absence of any Hamburg senator. Bauernblatt journalists described the convocation as a “protest meeting” (Protestkundgebung) that nevertheless proceeded with decorum and in a democratic spirit.

Edmund Rehwinkel’s deputy backed up his demand to set a higher price cap per federal ordinance figures. Running costs for the many family farms that had up to five cows were at an all-time high. Raising the price even a few Pfennige would mean the difference between farmers’ sinking and swimming. A member of


60 His Lower Saxon colleague Edmund Rehwinkel did not attend due to illness.

61 “verlief in durchaus angemessenen, demokratischen Formen.”
the Hamburg delegation criticized his city’s officials and population for “demanding everything from farmers in tough times but forgetting about farmers when they had it hard.” Ordinary farmers shared this ill humor and suggested curtailment of milk deliveries to Hamburg. Struve expressed irritation at “certain leftist governments” (nichtbürgerlichen Regierungen) who thought they could ignore federal ordinances and pass their own decrees in favor of the “working population.” Struve alleged that city governments used the term to exclude farmers and their families. He diagnosed this behavior as Land egoism (Länderegoismus). Struve considered the optional exclusion of Hamburg from Schleswig-Holstein’s beef and pork to be an example of “economic self-help” for beleaguered farmers. The Bauernblatt reporter asserted that the politician’s closing statement that agriculture “was, as always, prepared to support the state” (die positive, staatsbejahenden und –erhaltenden Kräfte) expressed the true meaning and intent of the Pinneberg meeting. The urban politicians of Hamburg and Bremen, not the farmers, were cast as non-compliant with government policies.

Perhaps more interesting than the content of the meeting itself was how the agrarian press portrayed it. Journalists navigated between giving voice to farmers’ anger and assuring readers that the proceedings ran in accordance with democracy. Nevertheless, farmers emerge as the injured party, waiting with “angelic patience” (Engelsgeduld) for Chancellor Adenauer to intervene to resolve the conflict. The phrase “self-help,” at once vague and all-encompassing, was a stock in phrase from the 1920s when protest was much less “civil” and did not occur in a democratic political culture. The moot strategy of excluding Hamburg from the livestock market of surrounding farms in Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony seems economically unrealistic. It also presented legal problems, given that nearly 90 percent of dairies surrounding the Hamburg

---

62 Similar sentiments were expressed in the Lower Saxon Landwirtschaftsblatt Weser-Ems, cited by Hohenstein, Bauernverbände, 274.
metropolitan area were organized into cooperatives. Gaining consent from all parties would be difficult.

From the beginning, agrarian circles in Schleswig-Holstein suspected labor unions of sowing discord between farmers and city-dwellers. Farm representatives accused unions of misleading Hamburg senators by exploiting the “milk flood” (Milchschwemme) to justify postponing price increases, but this temporary surplus of milk had seasonal and biological causes, according to farmers, and was no reason to refuse milk price increases. Labor unions were also criticized for their shortsighted demagoguery, which sacrificed the interests of wage-earners on farms. During the “Milk War,” negotiations for raising workers’ wages occurred in Schleswig-Holstein, according to minutes from the Farmers’ Association. Lumping farmers and rural workers must have seemed like a cynical ploy on the part of agrarian lobbyists. In other circumstances, farmers’ spokesmen tended to elide workers’ interests out of the discussion.

In late June and July, farm organizations in both Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony held a vote (Urabstimmung) on whether to restrict deliveries to Bremen, Hamburg, Lübeck, and other cities or to switch dairy production to more profitable, albeit subsidized, ventures (i.e., butter and cheese). With negotiations achieving no tangible result by early August, farmers finally decided to boycott milk deliveries to Bremen. A similar boycott loomed over Hamburg. Meanwhile Edmund Rehwinkel from Lower Saxony declared:

We have asked Danish farmers not to stab Germans in the back (in den Rücken zu fallen) in their struggle for higher prices by delivering their own milk. The Danes will be loyal and act with a sense of solidarity. There is a green International out there, not just a red one!  

---

63 Vorstandsprotokollen des Bauernverbandes Schleswig-Holstein e.V., Rendsburg, Minutes of Board Meeting July 25, 1951. I would like to thank Herr Gersteuer making these files accessible to me. Unfortunately, the board meeting minutes include little discussion of the conflict. In neighboring Lower Saxony, farm workers, including milkers, went on strike that summer when wages were not increased. Hohenstein, Bauernverbände, 295.

64 Hamburger Abendblatt 4 Nr.173 (July 27, 1951).
Journalists writing for the *Hamburger Abendblatt* noted that in “council of war” meetings held in villages surrounding Hamburg, there were many Imperial flags flying (black-white-red). Rehwinkel was further quoted: “We won’t allow a single dairy to step out of line (*aus der Reihe tanzen*). The rural populace’s patience is at an end.” His statement reveals that lobbyists’ control over farmers’ actions was perhaps not guaranteed.

One of the most interesting sources on this episode is a lengthy article from *Der Spiegel*. Its colorful language brings to readers’ attention the promises Adenauer made to farmers at Rhöndorf in February. Thus, “Rehwinkel demands that Chancellor Adenauer himself should bring about peace because he was the one who drizzled hasty promises in February in Rhöndorf allowing the farming mentality, like yoghurt, to sour.”65 Whatever may be said for the writer’s tongue-in-cheek tone, the article was substantive, providing both sides of the story and a battery of statistics to back each case. It also indicated the difficult to quantify but undeniable power of agrarian leaders. Rehwinkel, Struve, and others regularly requested meetings with the Chancellor, which were usually granted. Because he established basic policy guidelines (Art. 65 of Basic Law), these interviews and meetings were important.66 The agriculture journals’ lead articles regularly summarized such meetings, conveying the impression that agriculture had a secure channel to the government powers.

The main contenders were Lower Saxon farm leader Edmund Rehwinkel and *Wirtschaftssenator* Hermann Wolters (SPD) of Hamburg. During the so-called “Four Länder

---

65 “Bis zum letzten Hansbur,” *Der Spiegel* 32 (August 8, 1951). “*Mit voreiligen Versprechungen den Joghurt-Keim in die inzwischen sauer gewordene Milch der bäuerlichen Denkungsart träufelte.*“

“Conference” on August 4, representatives from Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony, Bremen, and Hamburg met. Wolters pulled no punches. He declared:

I completely understand farmers’ demands for more revenue in view of the rising prices and wages. But farmers have been misused in a pathetic action, where the men standing behind the scenes are managers of the Green Front as well as directors of creameries and presidents of agricultural associations. The trade margin (Handelsspanne) between producer price (23 Pfennige) and final consumer price is far too wide.

Wolters then offered a breakdown of all the costs and dues to move milk from the cow to the consumer (i.e., transportation, UV treatment, pasteurization, etc.) to demonstrate that too many middlemen, such as milk supplier cooperatives, were responsible for frittering away money that farmers should have collected. Rehwinkel provided his own figures, revealing how farmers’ buying power had declined dramatically since the late 1920s. In effect, he was underlining the urgent need for parity between the costs associated with agricultural production and the prices farmers received for their goods. This discussion recalled the Farm Association’s memo from February 1951 noted in the previous section and anticipated the passage of the Agriculture Law in 1955. At the end of the article, we learn that Senator Wolters wished to sue the Lower Saxon Landvolk for price-fixing and cartel formation. Farmers in Hesse were dissuaded from boycotting as soon as the US High Commission heard about it. Farmers’ actions were considered a breach of the Allied De-Cartelization Law. The legislation governing milk

---

67 An allusion back to the Weimar Republic, whose fragmented political scene was replete with “fronts” such as the “red front” (Communists), the “iron front” (the Social Democrats’ last-minute defense against the National Socialists), the Harzburg Front (NSDAP and right-wing organizations like Steel Helmet), and the “green front,” a farmers’ interest organization that represented the landed aristocracy as well. This loose confederation felt little to no attachment to the Weimar Republic. For a contemporary account see Erwin Topf, Die grüne Front: der Kampf um den deutsche Acker (Berlin, 1933); for a scholarly treatment, Stephanie Merkenich, Grüne Front gegen Weimer: Reichs-Landbund und agrarischer Lobbyismus 1918-1933 (Düsseldorf, 1998).

68 “Bis zum letzten Hansbur,”
prices called for federal arbitration if disagreement occurred between Länder (in this case Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony and Hamburg).

Given the historical context of a lost world war and the mass hunger that was a collective experience of the late 1940s, the irreverent tone of the Spiegel article is striking. Within only a few years, the problem had switched from scarcity to overabundance. The use of irony, humor, and military terminology of a city “under siege” (e.g., the cities are faced with “capitulation or open battle”) belied the seriousness of the situation. Rehwinkel’s title of farming-leader (Bauernführer), significantly not in quotation marks, carried unpleasant associations to the Third Reich. Indeed, the article’s title may have been inspired by the “Potato War” of 1947, when regions like Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony, and Bavaria were compelled to send part of their harvests to population centers. From state governments’ perspectives, this represented an arrogation on the part of centralized bizone administration. In both the “Potato” and “Milk” Wars, the tug-of-war in federalism was waged between sides that used statistics to back their cases—estimates for how much the harvest could bring in differed by as much as 100 percent.69

The document illustrates a battle between a conservative farming leader representing producers and a Social Democratic city official representing consumers. Except for a few references to post-WWII parties or technology (i.e., neon lights), this article could have been written either in 1931 or 1951. Even before the Great Depression, farmers in Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein waged an intermittent war against the central government and larger cities, using methods including tax evasion, boycotts, and even bomb attacks. That this case pitted the SPD city government against farmers and a tepid CDU central government added a different twist. Although the writer did not make an explicit comparison to the so-called

---

69 Manfred Görtemaker, Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: von der Gründung bis zur Gegenwart (Munich, 1999), 134-35.
Landvolkbewegung,\textsuperscript{70} he alluded to old scores being settled between pro-republican Social Democrats and anti-democratic populists of the “green front” in the post-war situation.\textsuperscript{71} Using the same terminology to refer to political groups facilitated thinking in terms of the Weimar Republic.

Significantly, only the farming leadership’s opinions were transmitted in this article. One recurring criticism leveled by city-based officials and journalists favorable to their interests was the alleged disconnect between individual farmers and the interest groups. Indeed, some columnists tried to drive the wedge between farmers and their lobbies deeper. Journalists claimed that farmers themselves were open to compromise, whereas their alleged representatives were more combative.\textsuperscript{72} Senator Wolters declared that the battle over milk prices did not target producers themselves but managers of the “Green Front,” an allusion to Weimar-era politics in which agrarian vested interests lobbied intensively with no regard for consumers’ interests.

Teasing out the “average” farmer’s opinions is difficult. The \textit{Hamburger Abendblatt} gave voice to both sides of the conflict in an article from July 30.\textsuperscript{73} In the editorial, titled “City and Countryside Hand-in-hand?,” farmer Wilhelm D. and housewife Elisabeth R. were asked for their opinions to help resolve the issue. Wilhelm D. enumerated the standard laundry list of problems dogging agriculture: society’s failure to appreciate farm work, the concomitant rural emigration, and repeated frustrated attempts by farmers since 1914 to modernize. He was vague as to why modernization failed but noted that the “ill-considered, even reckless import policy”


\textsuperscript{72} Hamburger Abendblatt 4 Nr. 175 (July 30, 1951).

\textsuperscript{73} Hamburger Abendblatt 4 Nr. 175 (July 30, 1951).
after the currency reform drove many farms under (*ganze Betriebszweige ruiniert*). The farmer rounded out his position declaring that his colleagues had exercised great patience during the “Milk War” and that their sense of duty (*Pflichtgedanken*) was the only reason Hamburg city dwellers could still buy their milk at 34 Pfg. His position was typical. We find similar attitudes in the farm press.

The social and political implications of milk and its price for the time period should not be underestimated. Leading agronomists Struve, Schmücker, and Bauknecht lodged an inquiry in the Bundestag in March 1950, pointing out that US deliveries of foodstuffs was winding down and asking if the federal government would step in to help finance the supply of milk for schoolchildren.74 Plainly, Struve and others were well aware of the political aspects of milk prices.

Voices of “ordinary” people serve as further reminder. Elisabeth R., representing the other side of the debate, claimed that although she grew up in the countryside (thus being sensitive to farmers’ wishes), she could not understand their arguments. She staked out her position as follows. She noted the listing of calculations including whether the farm was family-run or a wage system, the farmer’s age and education level, and the technological advancement of the farm, and she countered these with the fact that “general price hikes affect all of us.” Elisabeth R. argued that her mother paid 16 Pfg. for high-quality milk in 1914, whereas even low-quality milk cost twice as much in the early 1950s. However, Elisabeth’s husband’s salary had not doubled in the interim. With three young children at home, raising the price of milk even 4 Pfg. would seriously cut into the family budget, she recounted. Her position was

---

74 Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Bundeskanzleramt, B 136 Nr. 86
Anfrage Nr. 62 der Abgeordneten Dr. Frey und Genossen (Struve, Schmücker, Bauknecht u.a.)
Betr.: Milchverwendung bei Schulspeisungen.
incomprehension at farmers’ demands for higher prices without turning out a better quality product in the form of higher fat content in the milk. Travel to Switzerland, Holland, and other neighboring countries shaped Elisabeth’s opinion. Indeed, it was the federal government’s intention to tie the new regulation on milk prices to improved quality.\textsuperscript{75}

Whether Elisabeth’s attitudes were representative of city-dwellers is unclear. Elisabeth R’s criticism was mild in comparison to a letter to the editor published in the Hamburger Abendblatt on August 7.\textsuperscript{76} The angry letter writer compared the boycott to the Soviet blockade of Berlin and called for a buyers’ boycott against farmers’ products.

By the end of September, after the Hanseatic cities had exhausted all their legal and tactical options, they relented. The milk price was increased to 38 Pfg./L.\textsuperscript{77} It would be simplistic to chalk up the “Milk War” as a victory for farmers. City newspapers recognized early that agriculture lacked the finances to maintain a delivery boycott for long. Even if farmers circumvented the market by churning milk into butter and depositing it into storage centers, they were dependent on federal subsidies and credits from the stingy Bank der deutschen Länder. However, the issue that tipped the battle in favor of farm interests was the legal and federal aspect. The Milk and Fats Law passed in February 1951 allowed the federal government to arbitrate, and the government sided with the farmers in this case.

Federal government hopes that farmers would quiet down were in vain. In fact, over time, federal backing, subsidies, and promises created an entitlement culture within the farm lobby. The long-term ramifications of the “Milk War” were evident in the Farmers’ Day (Bauernntag)

\textsuperscript{75} LAS Abt. 605 Nr. 2330, Der Bundesminister für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten an den Herrn Präsidenten des Deutschen Bundestages (Bonn, 2 Mai 1951): “Mit der Neuregelung der Trinkmilchpreise soll eine Verbesserung der Qualität der Trinkmilch verbunden werden.”

\textsuperscript{76} 4 Nr. 177.

\textsuperscript{77} Jung, Bauern oder Unternehmer, 107.
held in September 1951 in Rendsburg. Andreas Hermes, president of the National Farmers’ Association, linked the Rhöndorf promises and the conflict over milk prices to the urgent necessity for the federal government to pass legislation for agriculture that would ensure price parity.78 Farmers’ income needed to match those of “comparable occupations” (vergleichbarer Berufsgruppen). By formally requesting government aid to establish parity, the DBV was anticipating their future advocacy during the passage of the Agriculture Law in 1955. In the early 1950s, the farm lobby understood “parity” as creating a level playing field for agriculture compared to other sectors, securing interest on agricultural capital, and balancing city and rural wages.79

The discord between producers and consumers should be seen in the larger context of the social tensions in Schleswig-Holstein. The demographic situation exacerbated conflicting interests. Interior Minister Paul Pagel wrote to a friend in March 1951:

> Considering that in this Land about half of its inhabitants are refugees and that in many communities only a third are locals, you can imagine that social tensions (Spannungen) are inevitable. In most cases we cannot speak of deeply held political beliefs (politischen Grundüberzeugung). It’s just about clashing interests (Es geht einfach Interessen gegen Interessen).80

Although Pagel was describing the relationship between refugees and locals, similar friction and resentments existed between farmers and city-dwellers, as we have seen. Although the “Milk War” is only a snapshot, it suggests that farmers—or at least their leaders—were still in the process of learning to accept the consumers’ side as legitimate and the “rules” of a democracy. Bremen, surrounded by Rehwinkel’s “troops” as the Der Spiegel article describes it,
was supplied by dairy trucks under armed police escort after the farmers’ boycott. In the Weimar Republic, farmers’ political violence was quite real; in the early Bonn Republic, the urban press referred to it facetiously.

3.4 The Agriculture Law (1955)

When Heinrich Lübke succeeded Niklas as Federal Agriculture Minister in 1953, he made it his mission to use the next decade to put West German agriculture on a firm competitive footing with other western European countries. As the “Magna Carta” (Constantin von Dietze) of West German agrarian policy, the 1955 Agriculture Law was meant to address both foreign and domestic components: easing German agriculture into world competition and including agriculture in the “economic miracle.” Lübke navigated between international and domestic concerns. However, he made it clear that modernization of agriculture was an unavoidable fact. He placed a model tractor on his desk in the agriculture ministry to underscore this.\(^81\) Traditional agriculture was quickly receding into the past.

In Schleswig-Holstein’s case, this led to “Programm Nord,” a plan initially intended to focus on certain geographical areas in need of improvement, particularly in infrastructure, but that grew into a twenty-five year project of considerable proportions. Although “Program North” lies outside the scope of this dissertation, the “Renovation Program” of 1952-53 deserves brief mention.\(^82\) The hundreds of millions of DM earmarked for rebuilding farm worker housing indicates that full recovery from the Second World War had not yet been achieved.

Scholarship on the Agriculture Law is largely unanimous that this legislation was not a turning point in agrarian policy but merely an attempt to tidy a bundle of disconnected plans,


\(^{82}\) Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Bundeskanzleramt B 136 Nr. 661 Sanierungsprogramm Schleswig-Holstein 1952-53.
subsidies, and programs.\textsuperscript{83} Policy discussions in the first half of the 1950s were remarkably consistent. The DBV requested in November 1950 that Niklas reestablish a balance in wages and prices. In February 1951, as we have seen, Chancellor Adenauer was asked to establish a profitable price system for farmers. During the general election campaign of 1953, the Union, liberals, and DP called for a “parity” law for farmers, reaffirmed by Chancellor Adenauer’s speech addressing the Bundestag that October.\textsuperscript{84} Therefore, for at least five years, phrases such as “parity” and “equitable prices” circulated before the Agriculture Law was passed.

Exactly what was “parity?” At the behest of the National Farmers’ Association, an economic think tank in Munich (\textit{Ifo-Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung}) attempted to articulate a working definition in the summer of 1951.\textsuperscript{85} As we have seen, agrarian advocates such as Wilhelm Niklas preferred to explain how agricultural production was unique and subject to many disadvantages—climatic and soil conditions, biological rhythms of farm animals, and crop rotation, to name a few. So what sense did it make to compare the livelihood of farm and factory workers? Dieter Ehrenreich’s dissertation makes clear how the terminology begged endless clarification.\textsuperscript{86} However, the clearer the terminology and frame of reference in the legislation was, the greater the transparency about whether agrarian policies met their targets or fell short would be.

---


\textsuperscript{84} Hendriks, \textit{Germany and European Integration}, 37.

\textsuperscript{85} For further see Kluge, \textit{40 Jahre} vol.I, 228ff.

\textsuperscript{86} Ehrenreich, “Die Subventionierung der Landwirtschaft,” 18-32.
The first impulse to draft a law came from the DBV, with political parties that claimed to represent their interests soon taking up the banner.\footnote{Bethusy-Huc, Demokratie und Interessenpolitik, 14.} In June 1954, the Liberals and Christian Democrats submitted a joint proposal to use pricing of agricultural products as a means to achieve income parity for agriculture.\footnote{Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestags vol.20 (24 June 1954), 1666-1676.} Small discrepancies existed between the proposals of the CDU and FDP. The former focused more on preserving family farms.\footnote{Bethusy-Huc, Demokratie, 15.} While Bundestag deputies discussed the bill, the Farmers’ Association chimed in for a guaranteed automatic cost-profit mechanism (\textit{Aufwand-Ertrag Parität}), but Lübke, on the advice of agronomists, would not agree.\footnote{Thiesen, Es begann, 19. Kluge, 40 Jahre vol.1, 228.} He only moved to cover costs (\textit{Kostendeckungs-Parität}) for “normal” or “rationally-run” farms. In other words, the Law was not a guarantee that existing farms would last until tomorrow. By rejecting automatic price mechanisms, Lübke agreed with Ludwig Erhard. Agriculture needed to be integrated into the social market economy and not be coddled.

The Law’s first paragraph outlined goals and strategies. It called for agriculture to be part of the economic upswing and to guarantee food for the population by means of a bundle of financial aids that would bring about income parity with other occupations. The Law called for annual “Green Reports” and “Green Plans” to analyze the current situation in agriculture and proposals on how to meet goals, respectively.

However problematic income comparisons among different occupations may have been, the DBV nevertheless marshaled impressive statistics\footnote{The following figures are from Helmut Neihaus, Leitbilder der Wirtschafts- und Agrarpolitik in der modernen Gesellschaft (Stuttgart, 1957), 147-49.} to prove that agriculture was lagging. For example, for 1952-53, if average monthly wages for an unskilled industrial worker were 204
DM, then agricultural laborers made no more than 180 DM. Lower-level civil servants or office workers might make 289 DM per month and independent farmers, 240 DM. For all farmers’ avowals and identifications with the middle class, the numbers told a different story. Fewer than one-third of farmers reached the middle-income bracket of 250-350 DM per month.

The Agriculture Law passed July 8, 1955 with near unanimity, a very rare occurrence in West German history. The Association interpreted this consensus as a mandate that any future government, irrespective of its composition, was obligated to use the means at its disposal to offset agriculture's natural and economic disadvantages. The law itself echoed similar legislation in Great Britain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Austria, where price-support mechanisms were employed to aid agriculture. Lübke coolly noted that in the West, practically no country truly followed free market principles with respect to their agriculture.

General narratives on the Agriculture Law, such as Ulrich Kluge’s, that discuss the national level tend to underplay the difficulty of implementing it on the Land level. The editor of Das Bauernblatt, not surprisingly, thought the input of those in farming would ensure that the legislation would not lose touch with reality. One of the unique issues facing Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture was distance to markets (Marktfere). Struve and his associates hoped that tax breaks on transportation would help keep costs down. He recast the law in terms of helping agriculture out of a “crisis of transition” (Übergangskrise) without specifying where he thought

---

92 Gerhard, Peasants into Farmers, 139.

93 Cited by Kluge, 40 Jahre, vol.1: „Daß in der Zukunft keine Regierung, sie mag aussehen wie sie will, an der Verpflichtung vorbeigehen kann, die Mittel der allgemeinen Wirtschafts- und Agrarpolitik einzusetzen, um die naturbedingten und wirtschaftlichen Nachteile der Landwirtschaft gegenüber anderen Wirtschaftsbereichen auszugleichen.“

94 “Der erste Schritt,” Das Bauernblatt 9 Nr. 35 (27 August), 1549-50. The expression is “nicht vom grünen Tisch,” i.e. not simply passed down from higher government levels.

95 For example, see Detlef Struve, “Agrarpolitik nach dem Landwirtschaftsgesetz,” Das Bauernblatt 9 Nr. 39 (September 24, 1955), 1762-65.
West German agriculture was headed or hazarding a guess as to how long this "transition" would last. Labor shortages and other issues were the crux of this transition. Indeed, the national farming journal, *Die Deutsche Bauernzeitung*, featured an article in January 1955 that focused on the annual loss of 7,000 workers from Schleswig-Holstein’s agricultural sector.\(^{96}\) Technological innovation and mechanization had made great strides in the interim but were insufficient to prevent a decline in potato cultivation and milk production. Struve thought winning consumers’ trust was necessary for farmers and that the Law should work toward preparing farming to meet world competition (*Ziel uneingeschränkte Wettbewerbsfähigkeit*).\(^{97}\)

The German Farmers’ Association was reluctant to cooperate with the 1955 Law. According to *Die Deutsche Bauernzeitung*, farmers were worried that, on implementation, the bill was losing sight of its “original” economic purpose to realign costs and profit.\(^{98}\) Although Detlef Struve was instrumental in the formulation of the Law, he faced considerable criticism in the mid-1950s in Schleswig-Holstein. Members of the *Deutsche Partei* and ex-Pomeranian *Landbund* president Joachim von Rohr spearheaded opposition to Struve’s leadership. On November 19, 1955 in Dithmarschen, for example, newly formed opposition groups within the *Bauernverband* organized a rally to protest Struve’s two mandates as Bundestag delegate and head of the Association as a conflict of interest.\(^{99}\) The thousand or so people in attendance also called for Federal Minister Lübke’s resignation. Writing forty years later, Erich Thiesen thought

\(^{96}\) “Beginnt Schleswig-Holstein zu extensivieren?“ *Die Deutsche Bauernzeitung* 8 Nr. 4 (January 27, 1955), 3.

\(^{97}\) Ibid.

\(^{98}\) “Der neue Entwurf in der Prüfung.“ *Die Deutsche Bauernzeitung* 8 Nr. 15 (April 14, 1955), 1. Provisions for tax, credit and social policies in the law threatened to “dilute the original purpose, to balance costs and profits” (*ob diese Erweiterung der Zielsetzung nicht auf eine Verwischung der ursprünglichen Aufgabenstellung, der Ertrag-Aufwand-Angleichung.*)

the momentary flare-up in the fall of 1955 was mostly a case of politicians from other areas, such as Lower Saxony, stoking discontent to make a name for themselves. Indeed, Struve at the time castigated those who “play farmers off against each other” with the dangerous fragmentation of the farming community. \(^{100}\) His tone is that of the head of a small but powerful lobby whose trump card was internal discipline. As if to underline this further, the editors of the *Bauernblatt* published a letter to the editor, written by a farmer who attended the meeting. Herbert Halck noted that the speakers made the same demands as Struve and lamented the use of unfounded criticism to turn “farmer against farmer.”\(^{101}\) According to Halck, the speakers at the meeting did not offer their own suggestions. Instead, von Rohr wished to represent farmers’ interests with “no strings attached” (*politische Ungebundenheit*)—a recipe for political irresponsibility.

In hindsight, the significance of internal fissures in the farming community in Schleswig-Holstein is rooted in its history. For Struve and anyone old enough to remember the Weimar Republic, the threat of fragmentation (*Zersplitterung*) loomed large. Politicians like Struve sought to channel and control farmers’ protest using votes (*Urabstimmung*) to pressure either state or federal governments, as had been done in 1951 during the “Milk War.” But “tax strikes, refusal to vote and the like aren’t on the table. […] Radicalism won’t convince anybody,” Struve warned.\(^{102}\) His examples were obvious references to the political activism of the late 1920s and Rehwinkel’s misguided leadership in the “Milk War.” In the mid-1950s losing the monopoly over the interest group was the most significant threat. Some urged that the very prominence of agriculture in the public consciousness in 1955 during the passage of the Act should be exploited

\(^{100}\) Detlef Struve, “Der Weg ist klar!” Das Bauernblatt 9 Nr. 48 (November 28, 1955), 1.

\(^{101}\) “Die Meinung der Leser,” Das Bauernblatt 9 Nr. 48 (November 28, 1955), 2170.

\(^{102}\) Das Bauernblatt, (December 31, 1955), 2430. Varain, *Parteien*, 305-06 also examines this episode without drawing parallels Weimar-era political activism. He points out that internal dissension in the Farmers’ Association tended to fall on political fault lines: those behind Struve were usually in the CDU, those behind the opposition groups were in the DP and FDP.
to build bridges between farmers and consumers. The minister for agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein, Claus Sieh, declared in 1956 that it was only with public awareness, understanding, and sympathy that structural change could successfully occur.103

The significance of the 1955 Agriculture Act for structural change in Schleswig-Holstein and other Länder was establishing mental frameworks. Nebulous ideas such as “just” prices and “equitable” income and the government’s self-imposed obligation to ensure that agriculture enjoyed the fruits of the “economic miracle” became the main issues in agrarian politics for the next decade. The vague language of the legislation made it too easy for agricultural budgets to balloon and subsidies to be granted indiscriminately, on the “water-can” principle (Gießkanneprinzip).

3.5 Conclusion

Comparing the periods 1945-1949 and 1949-1955 in Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture, we can see that crisis pervaded the former and the latter represented a move toward stabilization, based on a broad consensus for government subsidies to achieve “parity” and preserve family farms rather than an unfettered free market forcing unduly rapid structural change. Structural change and democratization were a series of half-measures, stopgaps, and compromises in the immediate postwar era. Certainly by the time the Agriculture Act of 1955 passed, federal and Land governments sought to control or at least channel change to include agriculture in the “economic miracle.” For farmers themselves, the leitmotif shifted from maximizing production regardless of financial prospects to concern for their livelihood in the face of the “price scissors” between their products and what they needed to buy. The debates between the National Farmers’

---

Association and the government concerning the scope of the law actually devolved to the question of structural change. That is, would the law catalyze industrious and innovative farmers’ adjustments or would it allow backward agriculture to continue on life support? By calling for an automatic mechanism to balance costs and profits, the National Farmers’ Association pushed for blanket protection of farming and slowed structural change. Lübke’s decision not to bow to their demands demonstrated foresight but made him a target for the farm lobby. Although consumers represented a far larger proportion of society, it was only the SPD that recognized their interests in price policies and farm subsidies, as outlined in the Bad Godesberg program of 1959.104

The “Milk War” case exemplified the transition. Farmers felt confident enough to boycott milk deliveries to force a price raise. The yearly “Green Reports” were basically report cards on the government, assigning “grades” on how well agriculture was integrated into the social market economy, using benchmarks such as farmers’ incomes. This legislation established the framework for agrarian policy discussions for the next decades; parity, the concept of “just” prices, and the sanctity of the family farm remained mainstays of debate. Ongoing structural changes were conceived in these terms. The law explains subsequent German demands for high commodity prices during Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) negotiations. Using price supports to protect farm incomes in turn meant restricting cheap imports of main commodities, such as livestock, whereas goods that the country could not produce in sufficient quantities, such as vegetable oils or feed grains, were exempt.105

---


105 Wilson and Wilson, German Agriculture in Transition, 49.
“Grow or Get Out”: European Integration and Structural Change in the Dairy Industry, 1955-1967

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the long decade during which Schleswig-Holstein’s agricultural history transitioned from a national to transnational frame of reference, that is, from the Agriculture Law in West Germany to the Western European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This transition revealed an increasing disconnect between farm lobby rhetoric, which emphasized the family farm, and the socio-economic reality of structural change, i.e., industrial agriculture. This disconnect reached a critical point in 1968, when widespread protests, political unrest, and fundamental changes in agriculture occurred. I argue that the lobby did most farmers a disservice by accepting the social, political, and economic consequences of structural change only with great reluctance. In Schleswig-Holstein’s case, agriculture navigated the path to integration with considerably difficulty.

Investigating first how Schleswig-Holstein’s structural change fared in the late 1950s will put this transition into context. How well-poised was agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein for European integration? I then summarize the most important institutions, agreements, and mechanisms of CAP. How did rural society in Schleswig-Holstein react to this process? Examining the “Professors’ Report” from October 1962, the farm protest in the spring of 1963, and the meteoric rise of the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) in 1966 will provide an answer to this question. All these topics illuminate structural change and the farmers’ degree of commitment to democracy.
Dairy farming furnishes us with a useful case study of structural change in Schleswig-Holstein under the heading of “grow or get out” (*wachsen oder weichen*), a stock phrase of the 1960s. This story of how “average” farmers perceived and reacted to this pressure must be told both from the policy level and “from below.” This approach is necessary to illustrate how *Land* and federal governments were under increasing pressure to expedite agricultural integration and how farmers in Schleswig-Holstein coped with structural change. The two main narrative threads, European agricultural integration and structural change in Schleswig-Holstein, can be fully understood only with reference to one another, as Schleswig-Holstein’s Agriculture Minister Claus Sieh recognized in late 1958.¹

Increasing pressure for farmers to rationalize, modernize, and innovate led to less indulgence in propping up “traditional” farms. The pace of structural change was at its greatest during the 1960s. As a rough guide, the rate of reduction in the number of farms hovered around 2 percent annually for this period.² In 1970 alone, 74,000 farms were given up.

### 4.2 Schleswig-Holstein, 1955-1960³

We need to understand how this *Land* fared under the Agriculture Law during the second half of the 1950s to gauge how prepared it was for CAP. Did national agricultural policy facilitate or hinder integration? A census indicated that there were 3,000 fewer farms in 1957

---

¹ LAS Abt. 721 Nr. 2308 (Landwirtschaftskammer 1952-1958), Hauptversammlung der Landwirtschaftskammer, November 21, 1958, 18.


³ See for example *Wort und Bild: Stimme der CDU in Schleswig-Holstein* 1 Nr. 4, 5, 6 (June-July, 1958).
than 1949. Some farmers left agriculture. Those remaining often increased their holdings, and a few refugees and other interested persons acquired farms. Of the working population of this Land, a full 20 percent still worked in agriculture by 1960, and agriculture continued to account for a relatively constant percentage of the GDP. In short, only a slight structural shift toward fewer, larger farms had occurred in Schleswig-Holstein between the end of the war and the mid-1950s.

If there can be a single symbol of agricultural structural change already commencing in the 1950s, it would have to be the tractor. Due to its versatility on the farm, it constituted a powerful symbol of change from animal to mechanical forms of work. The number of tractors in Schleswig-Holstein increased appreciably from 7,508 in 1950 to 19,549 in 1954 and 29,827 in 1957. In his memoirs, Andreas Thomsen recalled that he had acquired a 24-HP “Hannomag” for his 27-hectare farm by the time he married in 1960. Other signs of increasing productivity and modernization surfaced as well. In dairy farming, the number of milk cows had increased modestly to 430,535 in 1957 from 387,415 in 1948. However, the percentage of animals subjected to testing and immunization increased from only 3.5 percent in 1952 to 45.7 percent in 1958, and the number of milking machines sold per year increased from 1,000 from 1952 to

---


5 Ibid, 33.


7 Andreas Thomsen, Die Thomsen’s von Rückenstadt. Nach Arbeitsstunden haben wir nie gefragt (Neukirchen, 2006), 139.
1955 to 1,500 thereafter. The income made per hectare of land increased for cattle farmers from 859 DM in 1954 and 1955 to 1,083 DM in 1956 and 1957.\(^8\)

Addressing the agricultural chamber before the first Green Report was issued in February 1956, Agriculture Minister Claus Sieh outlined three effects the Agriculture Law had on structural change. First, it spared agriculture the fate of being the “stepchild of the economic miracle.” Second, it did not nullify but rather set the conditions for farmers to exercise individual initiative, and third, the “guiding principle in the future must be making the greatest economic gain for every use of labor or energy.”\(^9\) This focus on the economic value of agriculture displaced traditional mentalities that prioritized keeping the farm within the family above economic rationale.

As always in a rural Land such as Schleswig-Holstein, structural change was closely tied to political developments. The Landtag election of September 28, 1958 and Ministerpräsident Kai-Uwe von Hassel’s speech at “Farmers’ Day” that month politically reflected both the gradual improvement in farmers’ well being and their growing identity with the Adenauer regime. For the first time, the CDU received a plurality of votes, 44 percent, in a Landtag election. It formed a coalition government with the FDP. Thirteen of the thirty-three CDU delegates were farmers, justifying Hans-Jürgen Klinker’s comment that “nothing in the CDU could get done against farmers’ wishes. The conservative element in agriculture formed the backbone of the CDU.”\(^10\) With such a strong position in Schleswig-Holstein, conservative and


\(^9\) Ansprache des Herrn Landesministers Sieh bei der Hauptversammlung der Landwirtschaftskammer February 17, 1956,” LAS Abt. 721 Nr. 2308, 7.

farm interests were confident that they would face structural change and European integration on their own terms.

In his situation report on agriculture delivered on Farmers’ Day in Rendsburg, Ministerpräsident von Hassel conceded that agriculture had not yet achieved parity with other socioeconomic groups, thus not quite fulfilling the provisions of the Agriculture Law. Nevertheless, it had come much closer to its goal. Based on a sample of farms, the difference between farm expenditures and incomes had declined. The annual report furnished by the agriculture chamber indicated that worker output (Umsätze je Arbeitskraft) had grown from 5,200 DM in 1950 and 1951 to 11,000 DM in 1956 and 1957. Agriculture Minister Sieh, addressing the agriculture chamber on March 24, 1958, reported that pre-tax average farm incomes had risen from 4,800 DM in 1955 and 1956 to 5,600 DM in 1956 and 1957. Sieh admitted that rising incomes were dependent on people continuing to leave agriculture. The number of tractors had increased. However, this candor was absent at the national level. Neither DBV spokesmen nor pages of the national Deutsche Bauernzeitung would admit the correlation between rising incomes and falling numbers of farmers. The lobby was cornered into an uncomfortable recognition that far fewer farmers could still produce more than enough food to sustain the population. No interest group wants to see itself shrink.

We might consider evidence from the district level on how agriculture was doing at that time. In March 1958, the Göttingen Agrarian Society held a conference to review the district of

11 Thiesen, Es begann, 33.

Pinneberg. This region was primarily devoted to pastureland (Grünland), and its strength in dairy and meat production fits well within the scope of my project. The main purpose of the conference was to investigate how best to integrate refugees and expellees into agriculture, a peculiarity of Schleswig-Holstein’s structural change. A summary of the conference report’s most important findings indicates that between 1949 and 1957, 2,700 workers had left farming in the district. These were mostly single male wage earners and women in farming families. The report also found that approximately 800 workers were needed to replace those who had left farming and that “housing farm workers is the foremost problem in Pinneberg farming.”

Farmers who needed workers would have to adjust and make provisions for married farm workers and their families. In 1957, fifty-five farmers expressed willingness to set aside land to build workers’ housing, whereas 124 workers were registered who expressed a wish to begin constructing housing. Regarding settling and integrating refugees, the authors of the conference report found that demand for farmland was strong and that settling refugees as full-time farmers could occur on only forty-eight plots of land. If farmers were unwilling to part with any of their land, then the refugees would be only too happy to find jobs in the cities. As a suburb of Hamburg, Pinneberg is a good example of how urbanization was an important factor in structural change.

---

13 Agrarsoziale Gesellschaft e.V. Göttingen (ed.), Material zur agrarsozialen Entwicklung des Kreises Pinneberg (Kiel, 1958). It bears mentioning that this was a collaborative effort among academics, government and practicing farmers.

14 Ibid, 7. This is puzzling in light of the rapid decline of non-family workers in agriculture. In 1949, 106,300 such workers were located in Schleswig-Holstein; by 1960 this had been reduced to 41,100. Alex Gloy et al., Der Weg in die EWG. Standort Erzeugung, Absatz und Investitionen der Schleswig-holsteinischen Landwirtschaft und die Tendenzen ihrer Entwicklung (Kiel, 1962), 14.

15 „Erforderliche Verbesserungen der landwirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse,” 75.
Conference participant Ministerialrat Schwede had much to say regarding developments in agriculture in the late 1950s as it related to the Agriculture Law. He noted that a farmer was both a consumer and producer, being ever more tied to other sectors of the economy in a web of prices and costs.¹⁶ For instance, Schwede recognized that increasing small farm incomes was in part dependent on creating jobs outside agriculture. Within agriculture itself, he deemed land reform and farm consolidation (Flurbereinigung) as the most important measures, insisting that ultimate responsibility to implement these processes lay with farmers themselves rather than government agencies. The prerequisite for structural change was “rousing farmers’ own initiative” (Erweckung der Eigeninitiative).¹⁷ Schwede cited the 1958 Green Report, which indicated that the number of farms of 5-10 and 10-20 hectares had increased over the past year and claimed that increasing farm sizes had helped integrate refugees. In fact, enlarging farms had killed two birds with one stone. Some farmers nearing retirement age were persuaded to sell part or all of their land to hopeful refugees in return for a pension. Turning to figures for Pinneberg, from 1949 to 1957, the number of 50-100 hectare farms increased 15 percent—very large operations indeed. Smaller plots of 1-5 hectares had decreased by 9 percent over the same period.¹⁸ Those compiling the report believed that compared to other agricultural regions in Germany, Pinneberg’s development (i.e., changing size and number of farms) had largely come to a standstill by the late 1950s. There were 2,700 fewer people working in agriculture in 1957

---

¹⁶ „Die Sicherung des ländlichen Lebensraumes als Aufgabe der Landeskultur,“ 15.

¹⁷ Ibid, 21.

¹⁸ „Die Landwirtschaft. Der augenblickliche Zustand,“ 48. Interestingly, very small plots of less than 1 hectares increased, a sign that part-time and hobby farming was of some significance.
than in 1949.\textsuperscript{19} Larger operations that used wage earners were more competitive than small family farms.

During the 1950s, one could observe increasing specialization (\textit{Sonderkulturen}). For example, tree and rose nurseries increased, whereas the production of old staples, such as oats and potatoes, declined. The declining number of horses and changing consumption habits helps explain the decline in these two crops.

Turning to livestock and dairy farming, the conference report authors noted that nearly half of the district’s land under cultivation was devoted to grass and pastureland.\textsuperscript{20} There were fewer cows in 1956 than in 1949, but the annual amount of milk produced per cow increased from 2,305 kg to 3,217 kg.\textsuperscript{21} During the same time period, more cows were used for their meat than their milk, indicating changing consumption patterns. The conference’s findings on changing crop cultivation patterns indicates a fair degree of responsiveness to market demands.

But would it be enough once European integration got underway?

A brief section on integrating refugees seems to contradict minister Schwede’s remarks during the conference. It appears that it was rare and difficult for refugees to acquire land of their own through purchase or leasing from full-time farmers.\textsuperscript{22} After all, farmers’ younger sons were also seeking land. In 1957 and 1958, seventy-four refugees were interested in acquiring a farming operation, but no one was willing to give up their land in return for an old-age pension. Family farms remained within the family whereas small new plots under less than 5 hectares

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid, 53.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid, 66.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid, 71.

\textsuperscript{22} „Die Eingliederung und landverbundene Seßhaftmachung von heimatvertriebenen Bauern,“ 78-79.
were abundant, and nearly 800 refugees got these. Schwede’s comments were for public consumption, explaining his optimism, but detailed analyses told a more nuanced story. The discrepancy reminds us that, even more than a decade after the end of World War II, Schleswig-Holstein was still the “first haven for refugees” (“Flüchtlingsland Nr. 1”).23 A figure for Schleswig-Holstein as a whole reinforces the idea that most land set aside for refugees to farm was on a part-time basis: of the 8,500 plots that went to refugees by 1958, 7,500 of them were part-time operations.24

A sociological study on agrarian areas in Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony, and the Rhineland conducted in 1953 and 1954 corroborates farmers’ reluctance to give up farming.25 In response to the question, “If you could choose your occupation again, what would it be?” 72 percent of farmers in Schleswig-Holstein answered they would choose farming. Keeping the farm within the family at any cost and thinking from the point of view of the farm (vom Hofe her)26 rather than economic rationale was a habit shared by generations of farmers. The authors concluded that “self-help and assistance from the state must work hand in hand” to address problems in agriculture.27 Labor mobility is a key facilitator in structural changes to agriculture. If farmers were unwilling to fully part with their land and livelihood, this meant Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture was inflexible when facing agricultural integration.

23 Titzck, Landtage in Schleswig-Holstein, 129.
26 Ibid, 31, 38.
27 Agrarsoziale Gesellschaft, Material zur agrarsozialen Entwicklung, 89.
How well prepared Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture was for European integration by the late 1950s depended whom you asked. Most agronomists and academics would have judged that Schleswig-Holstein stood comparatively well. Its average farm size was on the high end of the spectrum in the Federal Republic, an indicator of a farm’s ability to adjust to changing market demands. J. Volkert Volquardson, who wrote the definitive monograph-length article on land reform in Schleswig-Holstein,28 believed in 1958 that Schleswig-Holstein may even have had a “head start” on integration compared to other Länder, at least from the structural point of view.29 Schleswig-Holstein’s farms averaged 20 hectares, whereas the federal average was only 8 hectares. Not nearly as much time, money, and energy needed to be spent on consolidating parcel holdings, which was a major problem in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg. A 1962 situation report on the Land’s agriculture concluded with cautious optimism concerning the future integration.30 At the same time, the report did not sugarcoat the consequences for farmers. The final responsibility to improve the internal functioning of a farm rested with the farmer himself. The conference report authors could not be certain of commodities prices but said it would be safe to assume that producers would not set them.31

Pessimists about integration also existed. In January 1961, Ministerialrat Schwede wrote that of the 1,100 farms divided into thirty-six classes for Schleswig-Holstein, only three classes met the goals of the Agriculture Law.32 On balance, farmers’ income-expenditure ratio was

28 „Zur Agrarreform in Schleswig-Holstein nach 1945.“
29 Bauernblatt 1958, p.1720. See also Thiesen, Es begann, 34.
30 Gloy et al., Der Weg in die EWG (1962).
31 Ibid, 75-76.
worse in 1960 than the year before. Farm lobbyists painted a rather different picture. *Bauernblatt* editorials adopted a “wait and see” attitude toward integration. Ministerialrat Ernst Engel, for example, informed farmers in two lengthy articles in January 1961 about the negotiations for CAP. He concluded by saying that West German agriculture had “as many opportunities as it faces dangers.”

Engel was a government employee. As a rule, the editors of the *Bauernblatt*, closer to farmers than the government, were more pessimistic about integration.

4.3 Points of Friction in Agricultural Integration, 1960-64

Having considered Schleswig-Holstein’s structural change by the late 1950s, we turn to the national context before examining integration. First we should consider how leading personalities shaped the perception and implementation of integration. Second, we should recognize the mentality that governed national agrarian politics in West Germany.

The year 1959 marked a turning point in West German agricultural history. On the national front for the farm lobby, Lower Saxon farm leader Edmund Rehwinkel became DBV president in 1959. He would become a major figure for slowing integration as long as it discriminated against West German agriculture. The leadership structure in the DBV changed so that Rehwinkel had untrammeled say. Under his leadership, the organization was hostile toward European integration. Contrarian voices, such as those in 1957 insisting that West Germany livestock farmers (*Veredelungswirtschaft*) were well positioned for integration, were silenced.

---


34 “Existenzsorgen,” *Das Bauernblatt* 16 Nr. 4 (January 21, 1961), 191-93; “Mehr Mut,” *Das Bauernblatt* 16 Nr. 6 (February 4, 1961), 339-40. In this article, the editor criticizes the federal government for not taking a tougher stand in Brussels, suggesting that ministers could learn from President Kennedy.

35 Ibid, 123.
At the federal level, Werner Schwarz, hitherto Detlef Struve’s deputy in the Schleswig-Holstein association, succeeded Heinrich Lübke as Federal Agriculture Minister the same year. The DBV rid itself of a potential foe (Lübke) and gained a more pliable agriculture minister (Schwarz). Lübke had had different ideas than the farm lobby in 1955 during the debates over the Agriculture Law in that he opposed setting price floors for milk and considered the German grain price “untenable.”\textsuperscript{36} For all these reasons, the DBV was not sad to see him go. The federal government soon adopted the farm lobby’s position on agricultural integration: to proceed as slowly as possible and with the least negative impact on German farmers.

A fairly homogenous group of agro-politicians in terms of age, social background, and political affiliations whose formative years had been passed in the Weimar Republic were put in charge to meet the challenge of European integration. Their opinions on structural change would come to dominate the headlines in the agrarian press in Schleswig-Holstein, particularly in the “price” versus “structural” policies.

The bone of contention for domestic agrarian politics for the 1958-1968 decade was “price” versus “structural” politics.\textsuperscript{37} These two schools of thought were not mutually exclusive but differed in degree of emphasis. The parity approach set prices for agricultural goods by artificially linking agriculture to more competitive industrial production. These “deficiency payments” were supposed to boost farm incomes. This system, already in place with the market regulation laws, favored grain and beet farmers but put farmers raising fodder crops at a disadvantage.

\textsuperscript{36} Patel, \textit{Europäisierung}, 118.

\textsuperscript{37} The following summary is based on a sensible, lucid discussion in Cecil, \textit{German Agriculture 1870-1970}, 47.
The farm lobby, advocating for the primacy of price policies, fought against lowering German agricultural prices to European market prices, particularly for grain, and put considerable pressure on the national government for price supports, direct subsidies, and other financial measures to assist farmers. Detlef Struve called this “vigorous price politics” (aktive Preispolitik), which was a universal euphemism in the lobby. Why did farmer leaders favor price policies? I believe Kiran Klaus Patel made compelling use of E.P. Thompson’s concept of the “moral economy.” Farmers wanted “fair” prices for their goods, not abstract subsidies set by statistical analysis.38 As Hans-Jürgen Klinker, one of the most prominent CDU politicians in Schleswig-Holstein, put it, “adequate prices spare us the need for subsidies.”39 The story of how the farm lobby became “veto player No. 1” in West Germany’s bid for agricultural integration has already been told.40 The DBV forced the government to adopt its maximalist price-policy position.

There was always another side to the story. The lobby clamped down but never completely silenced advocates for “structural” policies, such as agronomists in academia and the Social Democrats. These advocates favored improving the basic conditions of agricultural production, such as creating infrastructure and consolidating holdings, to enable farmers to independently eliminate the disparity in income and living standards under which agriculture labored. Thus, more limited federal and state funds, combined with farmers’ “self-help,” would meet the fundamental aim of the Agriculture Law: to include agriculture in the “economic

---

38 Patel, “Veto Player No. 1,” 355. Emphasis on prices rather than subsidized incomes was a marker of convergence between the farm lobby and CDU/CSU. Consider DBK 34 Nr. 2 (1981), 59.


40 Patel, “Veto Player Nr. 1.”
miracle.” Structural policies were unpopular with the DBV because they were tedious, long-term projects, such as consolidation, that did not promise to enable farmers to immediately enjoy the fruits of the booming economy.

It would be an oversimplification, however, to claim that the Farmers’ Association ignored structural policies and stood only for price policies until the late 1960s. This is the difference between studying agrarian history at the national versus Land level. The CDU in Schleswig-Holstein released its 1963 agrarian program in which structural improvements appeared next to improving farmers’ income as top priorities. In any case, the predominance of price support in most farmers’ and lobbyists’ mindsets in West Germany colored their initial reaction to European integration, to which we now turn.

Of greatest significance for the direction and speed of structural change was surely the move toward European integration, in the form of CAP. The literature on CAP is extensive, but we do not need a lengthy investigation of CAP because the provisions in the Treaty of Rome pertaining to agriculture closely resembled the German Agriculture Law. In this section, I briefly outline the contours of CAP, its function and projected impact, and the political reactions of farmers to the integration process. For the latter, I examine the crisis of farm lobby leadership and the growth of demagoguery, the outcry over the “professor’s report,” and the two main issues dominating the headlines: the grain price and the family farm. The right-wing NPD made

---

41 Gerhard, Peasants into Farmers, 183.


inroads in certain sectors of agriculture. In the following section, I focus on a more constructive effort to meet the pressures of integration in dairy farming.

The Treaties of Rome (1958) and Stresa (1958) marked a decisive turning point in agrarian history in Western Europe. Article 24 of West Germany’s Basic Law allowed for the transfer of certain sovereign powers, such as agriculture policy, to international institutions. Initially, Bonn adopted a “wait and see” strategy regarding agricultural integration. However, whatever their qualms on that front, the political need for security loomed large amidst the Soviet intervention in Hungary, the Suez crisis, and the Algerian civil war.\(^{44}\) This meant the necessity of stockpiling food.

Just as the DBV was an umbrella organization for farm groups in West Germany, so, too, the Comité des Organisations Professionelles Agricoles de la CCE (COPA) functioned to represent national agricultural interests at the European level. This organization channeled farmers’ interests to influence the Council of Ministers and Commission. The DBV at first boycotted COPA meetings, such as in 1967 over the grain price, but then changed tactics to participate regularly. European integration could mean opening another channel for the lobby to mobilize support. So European integration did not necessarily mean diminution of the power of lobbies.

Art. 39 of the Treaty of Rome listed five aims for common agricultural policy: increasing productivity; optimizing production factors, particularly labor; stabilizing markets; assuring food supply; and ensuring both an adequate standard of living for farmers and reasonable prices for consumers. To achieve these goals, a price support mechanism was adopted. In Stresa (July 1958), French, German and Italian negotiators agreed that the family farm would remain the

\(^{44}\) Wilson and Wilson, German Agriculture in Transition, 74.
basic unit of agriculture. However, given the significant diversity within Western European agriculture, this merely begged the question what was a family farm. In his opening address, Walter Hallstein, presiding over the commission, ignored these differences:

Agricultural operations in nearly all of Europe have the same family structure. Politicians and economists can be unanimous on this point: that family farms must be preserved and that their independence and value (menschlichen Werten) should keep pace (Gleichschritt) with modern society.45

Thus farming was connected to the central role of the family in Adenauer’s politics.

If vagueness had suited West German national agrarian policy for the period 1949-1955, then it seems this was also the case for European negotiators. They postponed difficult questions about subsidies as “detailed” work. In any case, the Treaties of Rome and Stresa were familiar to German politicians, harkening to the Agriculture Law, which perhaps made negotiators underestimate the difficulty of structural change under European auspices.

A brief explanation of how CAP functioned is in order.46 Each year, agriculture ministers from the six met and established four price levels: target, intervention, export subsidy, and import threshold. The first was the desired or target price. The target price for grain was specified for the Ruhr, a densely populated area with little production where market prices were expected to be the highest. If this price encouraged farmers to produce more than the market could absorb, then the government bought the surplus at intervention prices, which were slightly below the target price. These quantities were stored and sold in installments to prevent price drops. Exporters who relieved the market of surplus received a subsidy approximately equal to


46 For this I am indebted to Robert Cecil’s lucid summary; German Agriculture 1870-1970, 62.
the difference between the intervention price and world price. In addition, there was a minimum import price or threshold price. Variable import taxes (i.e., levies) were charged on imports to bridge the gap between world prices and the minimum import price. The Federal Republic was not an overall agricultural exporter, so it benefitted little from subsidizing exporters, but the Federal Republic shared in financing, which became more onerous. Agricultural prices were fixed in units of account (Rechnungseinheit), equivalent to the gold content of the 1960 US dollar. In time, this would be dubbed the “Green Dollar.” For all the complexity of price regulation in CAP, we should remember that price occupied the central place in most CAP controversies, policy discussions, and implementation of structural change, as in national agrarian politics.

The geographers Geoff and Olivia Wilson have devised three graphs to clarify the basic pricing mechanism (Figure 1). The new system essentially envisioned a phasing out of protectionist national agricultural policies by 1970 while uniting Western European agriculture to protect it as a whole from the outside markets. Governments intervened to maintain prices within a narrow bandwidth, in turn stabilizing the agriculture market and farm incomes.

---

47 Cecil, German Agriculture, 66.

48 Wilson and Wilson, German Agriculture in Transition, 76.
This system was financed through the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF). Each member state paid a fixed national contribution into this fund. West Germany paid approximately 32 percent of the total. Net exporters such as the Netherlands benefitted from this program, whereas importers such as West Germany had to pay for expensive food imports. In effect, the Bund was doubly burdened, paying into the European agriculture fund and simultaneously paying its own farmers through the Green Plans.

The first half of the 1960s was decisive for the evolution of CAP. In 1960, member states had agreed upon the central mechanism by which it would operate: a guaranteed buyout system (Abschöpfungssystem). Marathon sessions in the winter of 1961-62 and December 1963 hammered out the regulations for specific products. By the end of 1964, the problem of common prices for important commodities, such as grain, was solved. Finally, the question of financing

---

the entire project emerged in spring 1965. Disagreement led to the French ploy of “empty chair” politics.\textsuperscript{50} West Germany would have to abolish or radically change cherished institutions such as the import and stocking boards, first introduced in the early 1950s (see Chapter 2). As scholars such as Patel have demonstrated, contrary to the image of West Germany being the “poster child” for integration, in the case of agriculture, Bonn was the difficult obstreperous negotiator.\textsuperscript{51} The farm lobby had blackmailed the government to adopt its maximalist position, for grain in particular.

Having summarized how CAP was supposed to work, we turn to three issues and controversies that emerged in West German agrarian politics: price, the family farm, and the “professors’ report.” Distilling the early history of West Germany’s agricultural integration to the common grain price is tempting but would require taking the farm lobby at its word. To be sure, as a basic staple for fodder and products such as bread, grain understandably would come to dominate the headlines. However, the lobby so monopolized debate that discovering contrarian opinions that reflect the diversity of agricultural interests including livestock farming, vineyards, and other crops, is nearly impossible. The national farm lobby and Schleswig-Holstein’s may not have agreed on all issues, but evidence is hard to locate. Thus, one of the lobby’s main coping strategies for structural change was to simplify the agenda and focus on grain, to the neglect of producers of other agricultural products.

To illustrate this monopoly, when he assumed the office of DBV president in 1959, Edmund Rehwinkel formulated a 14-point agenda underscoring the inviolability of the grain price. On June 29, 1960, Chancellor Adenauer held a cabinet meeting in which the grain price

\textsuperscript{50} For this basic outline of events, Patel, \textit{Europäisierung wider Willen}, 289.

\textsuperscript{51} Patel, \textit{Europäisierung wider Willen}.
was discussed. He distanced himself from the maximal demands that the DBV had lodged and
groused that the “Rhöndorf legend” from 1951 was interpreted as a blank check by farmers.
Adenauer produced a letter from Detlef Struve that urged the government to bury the grain price
issue at least until after national elections in the following fall. Struve warned that lowering the
grain price prematurely would “jeopardize the trust (Vertrauensbasis) between the CDU and
agriculture.” Struve thus conformed to the national lobby’s position, reducing the complexity
of agrarian policy to a single issue, even though the Land he represented, Schleswig-Holstein,
was by no means dominated by grain cultivation. Unfortunately, the pages of the Bauernblatt
often simply reprint what federal ministers or the national lobby said about a given issue rather
than offer unique insight from Schleswig-Holstein’s circumstances.

The “Seven-Year War” over grain prices motivated scholars to study this phenomenon.
Several monographs on the Farmers’ Association investigated whether the lobby exercised
disproportionate power. One of the main questions is whether the Farmers’ Association
facilitated or hindered the processes of social stabilization and political liberalization in the

---

52 Cited by Patel, Europäisierung, 128. At a meeting of the CDU agriculture committee for Schleswig-Holstein in
late October 1964, Struve expressed his conviction about Chancellor Erhard’s “absolutely honorable intentions” to
keep his promise not to touch the grain price (absolut ehrlichen Haltung des Bundeskanzlers), “Protokoll über die
Sitzung des Landesarbeitskreises ‘Agrarpolitik’ der CDU-Landesverband SH, 26.10.1964 , ACDP 03-006 088/2,
p.5.

53 Sadly, I was not granted permission by the German Farm Association to examine the records of its board meetings
held in Koblenz, which might have shed light on internal disagreements in the lobby’s leadership.

54 For criticism of this lobby, see Theodor Eschenburg, Herrschaft der Verbände (Stuttgart, 1955). Eschenburg
advised Paul Ackermann in his project on the Bauernverband, one of the few monographs on it: Paul Ackermann,
Der Deutsche Bauernverband im politischen Kräftepiel der Bundesrepublik. Die Einflußnahme des DBVs auf die
Entscheidung über den europäischen Getreidepreis (Tübingen, 1970). For a modern dissertation, see Gerhard,
„Peasants into Farmers,“ chapter 5: Interest Groups in German Politics: the Peasant’s League, 155-79.
Federal Republic.\textsuperscript{55} Working in the late 1960s, Paul Ackermann concluded that the lobby did wield too much sway on the grain question, given the shrinking importance of agriculture, cornering government agencies such as the agriculture ministry to adopt its maximalist position.

In a more recent study, Kiran Patel agrees that the lobby pushed the government to adopt a “veto position”\textsuperscript{56} regarding the grain price during negotiations in Brussels. Although this scholarship is valuable, a fuller picture of the Land-level agrarian politics beyond the grain price issue is necessary.

Given the importance of dairy farming in Schleswig-Holstein, it is logical to ask how farmers stood regarding adjustment to CAP. In September 1964, Struve wrote to both Federal Economics Minister Schmücker and the head of the CDU delegation Rasner in the Bundestag, insisting that the payout price for milk not drop “under any circumstances” during negotiations in Brussels.\textsuperscript{57} Any drop would “hit our party in a most sensitive spot.”\textsuperscript{58} In cabinet discussions in October 1964, participants wished to avoid alienating either producers or consumers regarding dairy prices, but the conundrum was how to balance competing interests.\textsuperscript{59} Those present agreed to advocate revision clauses in Brussels. In contrast, negotiations in 1966 to set common dairy-product prices proceeded smoothly, mostly because the common price was set just above West German prices.\textsuperscript{60} West German politicians and farmers alike gradually chose to move beyond the

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Patel, \textit{Europäisierung wider Willen}, 149. Patel believes the DBV’s role in these processes has been overlooked; Gerhard’s dissertation suggests that the interest group hindered farmers’ adjustment to new economic, social and political realities.}
\footnote{Kiran Klaus Patel, “Veto Player No. 1.”}
\footnote{Struve and Schmücker, Struve an Rasner, 1.Sept.1964, Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Bundeskanzleramt, B 136/3549.}
\footnote{Ibid, \textit{Das würde unsere Partei agrarpolitisch mit an der empfindlichsten Stelle treffen.}}
\footnote{Bonn, 20.Okt.1964 Vermerk für die Kabinettssitzung Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Bundeskanzleramt, B 136/3549.}
\footnote{Hendriks, \textit{Germany and European Integration}.}
\end{footnotes}
adversarial binary of national protectionism versus international integration. The unified milk market was established by the Council on July 29, 1968. The price to be imposed was that fixed by the council in July 1966. The agreed upon price matched current German prices. In general, the market organization was more flexible for milk and beef than for other commodities.61

The desire to keep prices as high as possible was consistent with the lack of enthusiasm for the EU, but exceptions existed. For example, at a CDU agrarian conference in Schleswig-Holstein in October 1966, we find three statements, including those of Agriculture Minister Engelbrecht-Greve (appointed October 1962) and Federal Minister Schwarz, that it was “senseless” (keinen Sinn) to have nothing but criticism of the EU.62 After all, CAP regulations for cheese, eggs, and poultry had helped Schleswig-Holstein, Minister Schwarz noted. Certainly the front pages of the Bauernblatt in the 1960s contained far more discontent, criticism, and complaints than positive statements. In October 1965, Theodor Sonnemann, once undersecretary of agriculture and now president of the agricultural cooperative Raiffeisen, wrote to the Chancellor that “farmers welcome EU regulations as a clear step forward beyond national market regulation laws.”63 Farmers were positive toward CAP only if it meant better prices than under the Agriculture Law.

Professor Fritz Baade wrote in 1958 that farmers needed the unvarnished truth about where their livelihood was headed, something the DBV was unwilling to do through its press

---


63 Cited by Patel, Europäisierung, 317.
Breaking the bubble was left to “outsiders.” In June 1962, the so-called “professors’ report” (Professorgutachten) was published. The panel of experts concluded that the Agriculture Law had failed to include farmers in the “economic miracle” via equitable income. Furthermore, the agricultural scientists warned that German grain prices would need to be substantially lowered pending European integration. One of the most prominent agricultural scientists and a frequent target of the DBV Helmut Niehaus summarized the Green Plan as a “disappointment.” Farmers would have to completely change their mindset and cast off centuries of tradition.

The panel’s findings created an uproar among farmers and serves as a useful touchstone to gauge their reaction to the prospect of CAP. Fortunately, one opinion from a government official in Schleswig-Holstein, Dr. Wolfgang Clauß has been preserved. For most of his article, he summarized the report’s findings, but he mentioned that the experts failed to support their claim that raising prices would incur more drawbacks than benefits. Clauß opined that the experts neglected to investigate what effect lowering prices might have had on production. He ended with the perfunctory advice to politicians to avoid action until all “open questions,” such as those he raised, had been adequately answered.

---

64 Fritz Baade, Die Deutsche Landwirtschaft im Gemeinsamen Markt (Baden-Baden, 1958), 17. See Ackermann, Der Deutsche Bauernverband, 37.

65 „Wie war nun die Bilanz der Grünen Pläne? Die Wirkung ist enttäuschend,” Helmut Niehaus, "Aktuelle fragen der Agrarpolitik im Rahmen der europäischen Integration,” Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Forschung des Landes Nordrheins-Westfalen, Folder 140 (Cologne, 1965), 20. There is no reason to believe he substantially altered his ideas between 1962 and 1965.

66 Helmut Niehaus, Agrarwirtschaft 8 (1959), 388.

67 “Noch eine Reihe offene Fragen,” Das Bauernblatt 19 Nr. 41 (October 13, 1962), 3108-09.
Erich Thiesen captured the farm lobby’s point of the view on the report in the lead editorial he wrote for the October 20, 1962 edition of the Bauernblatt. He claimed that the professors had “finally” accepted to the view long held by farmers that lowering grain prices would necessarily lower prices for livestock, dairy, and poultry farmers. This view helps explain why the Schleswig-Holstein lobby stood in solidarity with its national umbrella organization, which pandered to grain farmers almost to the exclusion of all others. The price for grain was the cornerstone of the entire structure. Thiesen questioned the report’s findings that many would have to leave agriculture to boost incomes for those remaining. He noted that this process would further burden already overworked farmers, particularly women, and would undermine the family farm, the building block of West German and European agriculture. He denied that farm organizations drew the veil over farmers’ eyes about the necessity of major structural adjustments. The commission’s demands to rationalize required financial aid far in excess of what farmers received, he argued. The commission’s proposals were purely economic yet endangered the livelihood (rütteln die Existenzgrundlagen) of countless farmers and their families. Thiesen wrote that structural change caused a natural weeding out process (Ausleseprozeß), but the commission went too far in proposing forcible or compulsory (zwangsläufig) measures to accelerate it.

The experts were branded the “gravediggers of agriculture.” Farmers used even more extreme rhetoric. Many West German farmers encountered erstwhile Dutch minister of agriculture Sicco Mansholt, who propagated his ideas of accelerated structural change, for the first time. He envisioned that tens of millions of farmers and their families would soon leave agriculture. In Göttingen that October, 8,000 farmers protested carrying black flags reminiscent

---

68 “Eine Zumutung,” Das Bauernblatt 19 Nr. 42 (October 20, 1962), 3183-84.
of the Rural People’s Movement in the late 1920s. Vice President Blume called for lowering interest rates for farm credit by 3 percent and demanded that the federal government pay for agriculture’s share of the equalization of burdens (Lastenausgleich) and a new social welfare plan. In an ironic twist to structural change, farmers mounted their tractors to blockade streets. Rehwinkel diagnosed a “dangerous superstition” of materialist-capitalist thinking: “that economics do not simply provide useful tools for human decisions but establish ineluctable processes.” Although price support and eliminating income gaps were top farm lobby priorities, the lobby’s defense refused to limit itself to mere economic markers such as price. They spouted how instrumental agriculture had been in the postwar recovery and “economic miracle,” the vital though intangible stabilizing role of agriculture in society, and the ever-looming danger of political crisis that would necessitate stockpiling of food reserves. The episode’s wider significance is that it demonstrates how farmers’ protest culture used provocative symbols from the past such as black flags. The deeper reason for hostility within the farming community was that a panel of experts in academia, not in agriculture, had the temerity to announce to farmers that adjustment would not be easy. “Outsiders,” in this case academics, would find themselves within the crosshairs of the farm lobby in structural change, and this would happen again in the late 1960s.

In addition to the grain price issue, the other main theme in agrarian debates in the early to mid-1960s was the sanctity of the family farm. The family farm remained central in any discussion, but how to best support it was contentious. The more the economic importance of


70 “Letzte Meldung: Protest in Göttingen,” *Das Bauernblatt* 19 Nr. 42 (October 20, 1962), 3183.

71 Cited by Hendriks, *Germany and European Integration*, 151.
agriculture declined, which annual Green Reports reiterated *ad nauseam*, the more the DBV clung to the intangible social and political value of a healthy agriculture epitomized by the family farm. The vagueness of the “family farm” was politically useful precisely because it was impossible to quantify or even define.

One way to extol the family farm was to look across the border to East Germany. This strategy also helped bolster the anti-Communist consensus between the CDU and the DBV. In early October 1966, a Schleswig-Holstein farmer visited neighboring Mecklenburg and reported his experiences in the *Bauernblatt*.72 The farmer and his companion were greeted warmly and constantly accompanied by SED officials on their tours of farms, which revealed a curious mixture of advancement and backwardness. The West German farmers were impressed with the great size of farms, with dozens of threshers silhouetted against the sky, but they were saddened to note that far more people were working each hectare of land on average than in the Federal Republic. Children whose parents might not even belong to collective farms were commandeered to work on farms after school. The elderly or infirm were not allowed to leave farming, but had to accept positions with less pay. The word on everyone’s lips was “cooperation,” but dilapidated cow sheds dated back to “grandfathers’ time.”73 The breakup of the family as the fundamental labor unit led to depression and neglected farms. So much for forced collectivization. Skepticism about family farms among agricultural scientists and EU commissioners such as Mansholt unsurprisingly provided an easy target for the farm press

73 Ibid.
cause.\textsuperscript{74} The significance of the “family farm” in agrarian discourse lay in its moral-political dimension, whatever its disadvantages from an economic point of view might have been.\textsuperscript{75}

Although consigning the family farm to history was uncontroversial in East Germany, the farm lobby in West Germany clung to the idea. Meanwhile, the “long farewell to agriculture,” in full force in the 1960s, profoundly changed the social and economic reality of farming.\textsuperscript{76} The image of the humble \textit{Bauernhof} might have been a comforting myth, but the political goal of preserving as many small to medium farms as possible collided with the desire to maintain incomes at an acceptable level, as the Göttingen agronomist Woermann recognized.\textsuperscript{77}

Official rhetoric clearly demarcated the line drawn between “East” and “West,” although actual farming practice was more nuanced. Individualism and personal property were extolled and the collective farm of the GDR was denigrated, but repeated efforts to attempted to encourage West German farmers to participate in communal work. The Evangelical Church published a pamphlet in the mid-1960s urging farmers consider “new forms of cooperation” (\textit{neue Formen überbetrieblicher Zusammenarbeit}).\textsuperscript{78} If an institution such as the church stood for modernization and innovation in agriculture, it should have set alarm bells ringing in the farm

\textsuperscript{74} The Dutch by this time considered agriculture from a more commercial perspective. Bluche and Patel, “Der Europäer als Bauer,” 154. For Mansholt himself, consider the biography: Johan van Merriënboer, \textit{Mansholt. Een biografie} (Amsterdam, 2006). Mansholt’s frontal assault on the family farm was mounted first in his infamous plan from December 1968 (see the next chapter).

\textsuperscript{75} Bluche and Patel, “Der Europäer als Bauer,” 155.

\textsuperscript{76} Daniela Münkel, \textit{Der lange Abschied vom Agrarland}.

\textsuperscript{77} „Landwirtschaft – Teil der Gesamtwirtschaft,“ Bauernkongreß der CDU (1965), 30: „Eine große Zahl kleinzäuerlicher und auch mittelbäuerlicher Betriebe unter ungünstigen Ertragsbedingungen besitzt keine ausreichende Einkommenskapazität, um die jeweilig als angemessen angesehenen Einkommenserwartungen zu befriedigen.“ The rift between public discourse on family farms and the socio-economic realities of it would grow so acute by the late 1960s that structural change seemed headed for crisis. See Chapter 5.

\textsuperscript{78} Die Evangelische Kirche Deutschlands (ed.), \textit{Die Neuordnung der Landwirtschaft in der Bundesrepublik als gesellschaftliche Aufgabe. Eine evangelische Denkschrift} (Berlin, 1965), 42.
lobby. The *Bauernblatt* published countless articles on machine parks or rings where farmers could jointly finance and operate tractors, threshers, and other machines, but the actual results were meager. The “Eastern Zone” and Eastern bloc countries were politically stigmatized, but farmers and their representatives were happy to reap economic rewards by selling beef, for example, to Poland and Romania in the fall of 1966. 79

In summary, the farm lobby’s positions on price policies, the professors’ report, and the fate of the family farm illustrate how poorly the lobby prepared German farmers for accelerated structural change due to European integration. The advocacy group clung to national frames of reference, measuring success or failure in terms of the 1955 Agriculture Law, and outdated views of the family farm to slow structural change.

### 4.4 Crisis in Farm Leadership and the Rise of the NPD, 1966-67

In the early 1960s, the issues dominating the agrarian agenda were the grain price, the professors’ report, and the family farm. These issues sparked further farm protests in northern Germany in the fall of 1963. Farmers’ Day in September was permeated by a feeling that “something” had to be done to address the problems of increasing income disparities, bad liquidity, increasing debt and costs, and the problem of market distance. 80 Struve and Rehwinkel both spoke in Rendsburg in September 1963, offering many palliatives. Struve pleaded for modern marketing agencies to achieve acceptable prices for farmers. Responding to liquidity issues, he called for state subsidies for diesel fuel. Rehwinkel, as usual, focused issues such as

---

79 “Entlastungsmaßnahmen am Rindermarkt,” Bauernblatt 20 Nr. 40 (October 1, 1966), 3831.

80 Bauernblatt 1963, 2825.
the overwork of women and children. As long as agricultural integration was a vague and far-off prospect, the farm lobby could feel secure in the status quo and its leadership.

This sentiment changed once the EU took shape. Local farm leaders came under fire for not pursuing their constituents’ interests with sufficient energy. Men such as Werner Schwarz, Edmund Rehwinkel, and Detlef Struve might have legitimately claimed to have spoken for farmers, but speaking as one would have been pushing it. They all came from established and respected families who had tended very large farms ranging from 80 to 150 hectares in size. They were not of the Junker caste but were certainly Großbauern, the esteemed local notables who dominated small-town politics in Germany for centuries. The size of their farms coincided with Mansholt’s recommendation for the optimal farm size in his 1968 plan. So-called “emergency action groups” (Notgemeinschaften) were formed in Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein, a sign that Rehwinkel’s and Struve’s reigns were not invulnerable. Günther Kaczenski, the leader of the movement, declared in a Der Spiegel article that “a reform of our own leadership” was necessary, meaning that of the DBV, which was too soft on the federal government regarding European agrarian policy. As early as 1960, he asked President Rehwinkel what the lobby planned to do about trade gaps (Handelsspannen) of 300 percent in

---

81 As pointed out by Thiesen, Es begann, 148.
82 Patel, Europäisierung wider Willen, 453.
Harburg, which caused alarming “depression and fear” to make the rounds at farmers’ Stammtische.\(^{85}\)

Subsequent relations festered because Kaczenski felt the president ignored his requests. By 1963, Kaczenski’s patience was at an end, and he formed a Notgemeinschaft, although claiming that he did so to reinforce Rehwinkel. Nevertheless, the Lower Saxon Landvolk requested the renegade to dissolve this organization that threatened the “unified group.”\(^{86}\) Much to the chagrin of the lobby’s board of governors, Kaczenski continued to gain traction, such as when he called on Rehwinkel to introduce tougher methods (Kampfmaßnahmen), including Luddite-like boycotts on buying machines. This approach garnered approval from his audience of 700 farmers from Stade and Lüneburg.\(^{87}\) The fiery speaker also attacked the CDU for spreading lies about him and the situation facing agriculture. He even filed a lawsuit against the Schleswig-Holstein Interior Ministry for the alleged slander that he was “inspired by Communism.”

The situation continued to escalate. Kaczenski organized an umbrella organization to coordinate action committees in Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, and Lower Saxony.\(^{88}\) At one point, Struve and Kaczenski came to physical blows, and Kaczenski was kicked out of the

\(^{85}\) Günter Kacenski an Rehwinkel, September 9, 1960, Niedersächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Hannover V.V.P. 38 Nr. 346, Nachlass Rehwinkel.

\(^{86}\) Landesverband des Niedersächsischen Landvolkes e.V., Hannover, 17.4.1963. Presseauswertung, Mittwoch. Verbandsbelange, Nieders. Hauptstaatsarchiv Hannover V.V.P. 38 Nr. 346, Nachlass Rehwinkel, „das geschlossene Vorgehen stören und schwächen.“

\(^{87}\) Informationsbericht über die Versammlung der “Notgemeinschaften” am 18.Mai im Schützenhaus Dobrock, V.V.P. 38 Nr. 346, Nachlass Rehwinkel.

\(^{88}\) „Aktionsausschuß Nord“ der Notgemeinschaft Landvolkbewegung gebildet, Nieders. Hauptstaatsarchiv Hannover V.V.P. 38 Nr. 346, Nachlass Rehwinkel.
DBV.\textsuperscript{89} The CDU admonished moderation to the radical farmers who gravitated to the emergency action groups. Württemberg Farm Association President Bernhard Bauknecht wrote a personal letter to his colleague Struve, declaring, “we cannot budge from the program of DBV” lest Rehwinkel be “overrun by his radicals.”\textsuperscript{90} Bauknecht was clearly referring to Kaczenski. The potential danger such emergency groups posed lay in their exploitation of political fault lines. A high proportion of those calling for fundamental change of the DBV were affiliated with the liberals (FDP). To be sure, most farmers in the FDP were not laissez-faire capitalists; they were attracted to the anti-integration platform. If anything, the FDP stood for even more protection of agriculture than the CDU.\textsuperscript{91}

Although the number of people in farming continued to dwindle, the “farm vote” could still be decisive in the 1960s. Rehwinkel often boasted that he could sway 5 million votes either way. It was an exaggeration. On the premise that the farm population represented 8 percent of all voters and that two-thirds of them voted CDU/CSU, F. Gerl estimated that elections the Union could not have obtained a majority in the 1965 and 1969 without its farm vote.\textsuperscript{92} In other words, for the SPD to obtain a lead over the CDU, at least half of farmers would need to switch to the former party. As Neville-Rolfe observed,\textsuperscript{93} neither option was conceivable.

A puzzling and unanswered question from the previous section is how the farm lobby turned the grain price into the agrarian policy question in the first half of the 1960s. In the case of

\textsuperscript{89} Patel, \textit{Europäisierung}, 141.

\textsuperscript{90} Bauknecht an Struve 9.8.1963 ACDP 01-128/44/1; „vom Programm des Deutschen Bauernverbandes nicht abrücken... von seinen Radikalinskis überfahren.“

\textsuperscript{91} Andrlik, “The Farmers and the State,” 110.

\textsuperscript{92} F. Gerl, “Parteien, Exekutive, Parlament in der Agrarpolitischen Willensbildung,“ \textit{Die Willensbildung in der Agrarpolitik} (Munich, 1971), 211.

\textsuperscript{93} Edmund Neville-Rolfe, \textit{The Politics of Agriculture in the European Community} (London, 1984),, 86.
Schleswig-Holstein, for all due importance of basic commodity prices (i.e., wheat, barley, and rye), livestock and dairy farming more than outweighed the economic importance of grain farmers. Nevertheless, farm leaders such as Struve became hardliners in the grain issue, even though beef and dairy farmers had an interest in lower grain prices for fodder. At a late November 1963 conference of the CDU, Struve divided his speech into West German and Land issues in agriculture. For the first part, he demanded that the European Economic Community (EEC) market regulations for milk and beef must not be allowed to “lead to a drop in income” for German farmers.\(^{94}\) Furthermore, the “EEC suggestion to adjust grain prices in one fell swoop is out of the question for German agriculture (\textit{nicht zumutbar}).”\(^{95}\) As for Schleswig-Holstein, Struve reiterated his standard list of demands: reduced taxes, lower interest rates, diesel oil subsidies, old age pensions, and continuing education. As a rule, such lists rarely articulated a funding source. Later in his discussion, Struve claimed that the EU’s suggested grain price adjustment was not a prerequisite for successfully concluding the “Kennedy Round” negotiations.\(^{96}\) Struve thought European politicians needed to ensure that products from dairy, poultry, and livestock farming (\textit{Veredelungserzeugnissen}) remained profitable. He believed that imports must remain restricted to items that did not compete with Schleswig-Holstein farmers, such as grain, oil seeds, Mediterranean fruits, and cotton. Struve even said that, in light of an uptick in livestock and dairy farming, demand for grain fodder would increase, which suggests a preference for low prices, but he then immediately rejected categorically lowering German grain prices.

\(^{94}\) „Das Agrarprogramm der CDU,“ Agrarpolitischen Konferenz der CDU (25.11.1963), ACDP 03-006 088/2, p.1.

\(^{95}\) Ibid, 1.

\(^{96}\) Kennedy wished to lower tariffs and tolls between the United States and Europe at this time. He successfully pressured the West Germans to lower import dues for poultry.
The two halves of his speech, for federal and Land concerns, seemed incongruent. In response to the national or transnational agrarian questions, he toed the DBV and CDU party lines, ignoring whatever deleterious effects stonewalling on grain prices might have had for Schleswig-Holstein. Struve probably did not feel disingenuous in his speech. He functioned as an agrarian politician with many hats, including president of Schleswig-Holstein’s farm association, Bundestag CDU delegate and deputy chair of the agriculture commission, and “right hand man” to the firebrand Edmund Rehwinkel. Struve spoke for both West German and Schleswig-Holstein agriculture, whatever internal contradictions that might entail, which was one consequence of structural change for farm leadership. Struve strenuously attempted to bring many different threads together. In a February 1964 meeting, he reiterated the top priority of preserving as many “viable” (lebensfähig) farms in Schleswig-Holstein as possible to meet the requirements of both the Agriculture Law and Art. 39 of the EEC Treaty.97 He was reluctant to suppose that European integration superseded national agricultural policy.

The foremost authority on German agricultural integration within CAP, Kiran Klaus Patel, described German policy as “schizophrenic.”98 That is, in the second half of the 1960s the federal government was well aware of the following paradox: with every step toward full integration, problems such as overproduction worsened. Although Bonn had been the “veto player” in the early 1960s, it now supported the status quo—integration. I believe “schizophrenia” also applies to the Land-level of agrarian politics. It explains the apparent disconnect between high grain prices, for which the lobby clamored and from which the dairy and livestock farmers in Schleswig-Holstein and elsewhere stood to lose by remaining in step.

97 “Die Agrarpolitik der CDU,” (8.2.1964), ACDP 03-006 088/2.

98 Patel, Europäisierung, 312-333. He borrowed the term from a memorandum sent to chancellor Erhard.
with a tiny majority within the farm lobby. Agriculture was becoming so diverse that politicians such as Struve had to resort to mental acrobatics to present a coherent front. Some farmers and demagogues such as Kaczynski interpreted this behavior as “lacking backbone.” Magistrates such as Struve had sold themselves to too many interests, forsaking the “ordinary” farmer. Far from diluting the importance of the DBV, CAP’s increasing complexity forced farmers to rely more on their interest group for advice on regulations, taxes, financing, and technical questions. This rather lopsided dependence meant that the lobby leadership could get away with radically simplifying complex issues, giving the misleading impression that agriculture stood as a unified bloc vis-à-vis structural change and integration. Again, those who sought to break away from the farm lobby probably resented how powerful it had become but also how unresponsive it was to some farmers’ interests.

Thus, it should be with a grain of salt that we consider Struve a “hard-liner” in the grain price question or any other aspect of agrarian policy. In a February 1964 meeting of the CDU-Schleswig-Holstein agrarian committee, he responded to Herr Plate’s pointed question regarding “fighting methods” (Kampfmaßnahmen) promised months before in Hamburg. Struve withheld comment until the end of the meeting, which he brought to a close declaring, “There is no leading figure in the DBV who advocates combative methods before our efforts at enlightenment (Aufklärungswelle) have reached the very last consumer.” In a closed meeting among fellow Christian Democrats, Struve could have been excused for taking a hardline approach for the grain price question. However, even in this setting, he was a consensus

---

99 As Ackermann and Patel have done.

100 Agrarausschuss CDU in Kiel, 8.2.1964, ACDP 03-006 088/2, p2.

101 Ibid, 4.
politician. Instead of seeking confrontation with consumers or the government, he stood for compromise and mutual understanding. Farmers needed help in terms of adequate prices, but they were responsible for lowering their costs as much as possible.

Kaczenski faulted Struve’s “many hats” and claimed that his multiple affiliations caused conflicts of interest, but we should consider how his membership in the CDU mollified his temperament compared to Edmund Rehwinkel, who was not a member of any political party, not to mention mavericks such as Kaczenski. A district farm chairman in Schleswig-Holstein defended Struve in the following way:

Of course Rehwinkel is tough and demanding, banging on the table, exploiting his lack of party affiliation. But Struve is also tough. He knows that you can’t crash through the wall. Struve is in the Bundestag, he has countless friends and connections, and in the long run these are more important than when someone who keeps demanding things so that the Chancellor says: “I need to speak to Struve.”

Struve was a key player in what Pastel has dubbed the “agro-political network”. It was not, strictly speaking, a lobby with narrowly defined interests and reach. Rather, men such as Struve acted in many roles as Bundestag delegates, state farm leaders, and in other capacities which blurred the line between state and non-state actors. The agriculture committee in the Bundestag chaired by Struve, the federal and state agriculture ministries, and the Farm Association all comprised this encompassing network. Multiple affiliations made it more difficult for players to adopt extreme positions, but a strong agrarian faction in the Bundestag and good connections with the chancellor convinced the government to adopt a tough stance for agrarian integration.

In light of the difficult negotiations over the grain price and unrest in agriculture, the federal government did its best to ease the transition into CAP. On April 30, 1965, the Bundestag

102 Cited by Ackermann, Der Deutsche Bauernverband, 46.
passed the EEC-Adjustment Law (*EWG-Anpassungsgesetz*) after considerable debate. The DBV jubilantly declared it a victory because it provided legal backing to Erhard’s verbal promise to compensate farmers’ loss of income due to lowered grain prices. The law obliged the federal government to set aside 1.03 billion DM above the Green Plan to facilitate West German integration into the common market. It was to remain in force until the transition period ended on December 31, 1969.\(^{103}\) However, only three months after the Bundestag election of September 19, 1965, after which Erhard briefly stayed in office, the agricultural budget was cut. Subsequently, under Kurt Georg Kiesinger’s Grand Coalition (SPD and Union), a new law from December 1967 amended the Adjustment Law. The 1 billion DM were no longer mentioned. Farmers protested vigorously.\(^{104}\) According to the *Bauernblatt*, farmers’ trust in the government was “deeply shaken,” which led to farmers’ leaders threatening to desert their traditional party, the CDU.\(^{105}\) On December 10, 1965, Agriculture Minister Hermann Höcherl attended the DBV general assembly and publicly agreed with Rehwinkel that the German government had shown bad faith to farmers.\(^{106}\) This feeling of betrayal would set off another round of agrarian protests and even threatened the alliance between conservatives and farmers, a relationship dating back to the founding of the Federal Republic.

---

\(^{103}\) Bauernblatt 1965, p.2050.

\(^{104}\) Thiesen, *Es Begann*, 112.

\(^{105}\) Bauernblatt 1967, 4388.

\(^{106}\) Averyt, *Agropolitics*. 62. Hermann Höcherl (CSU), a Bavarian, replaced Schwarz as federal agriculture minister in October 1965. Struve was considered, but it was thought better to alternate between northern and southern Germans (i.e. Niklas and Höcherl were Bavarians, Schwarz was from Schleswig-Holstein). In marked contrast to Schwarz, Höcherl was much more attuned to small and part-time farmers, which were more numerous in Bavaria than in northern Germany. Patel, *Europäisierung*, 298-300.
As Kiran Klaus Patel recognized, one of the most important reasons why the federal government was prepared to concede to farmers’ wishes in many issues was due to recent history.\textsuperscript{107} If a single lesson could be gathered from the scholarship of Alexander Gerschenkron, Barrington Moore, or Gerhard Stoltenberg, it was the necessity to settle agriculture within society. Thus, it was logical that Bonn adopted the farm lobby’s hardline position on the grain price during negotiations in Brussels. Stoltenberg (CDU), historian and later minister president of Schleswig-Holstein, ended his 1962 \textit{Habilitationsschrift} with the claim that the Rural People’s Movement in 1920s was a “warning and lesson for us.”\textsuperscript{108} He implied that government cuts to the farm budget risked alienating farmers. Economic distress would lead to political radicalization. The continuing decline in numbers of people engaged in agriculture seemed to have little effect on conservative politicians’ concern to keep farmers happy. Thus, some began seeking new friends.

The brief relationship between farmers and the NPD in the late 1960s drew contemporary scholarly attention.\textsuperscript{109} The \textit{Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands} emerged in 1964 as the successor to the German Reich Party. Scholars disagree whether to call it neo-Nazi, but it was definitely on the far right.\textsuperscript{110} It espoused a \textit{völkisch} nationalist, anti-immigrant, and anti-democratic ideology. By 1967, the party had delegates in the legislatures for Bremen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Lower Saxony, and Schleswig-Holstein. This electoral success revived interest in the sociology of Rudolf Heberle, who had investigated rural election behavior in the early 1930s.

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid, 284.
\textsuperscript{108} Stoltenberg. \textit{Politische Strömungen}, 204.
\textsuperscript{110} Walter Laqueur, \textit{Fascism: Past, Present and Future} (Oxford, 1996), 110, denies that the party was neo-Nazi in the 1960s.
Was history repeating itself? Investigators were keen to determine what kinds of people in rural society supported the NPD. Downward pressure on farm incomes led many farmers to blame the CDU for not adequately defending their interests during the move to integration. The NPD was able to exploit a political opening by raising the question “what have you done for me lately?”

Unlike the CDU, the party was not burdened with an international profile or the responsibility of governance. Rehwinkel himself hosted NPD politicians at his Celle estate, justifying his actions by arguing that “the NPD has a place in a democracy so long as it fulfills farmers’ expectations and steers a clear conservative course.”

On May 2, 1966, the CDU-Schleswig-Holstein passed a circular to district party offices, reporting about NPD efforts. The Christian Democrats expressed alarm at the rising support (Stimmensteigerung) in several districts for the radical party. Of the eighteen district NPD centers, Husum, Steinburg, Rendsburg, and Oldenburg were the most active. In communal elections, the party tended to fare best in small communities, winning 15.8 percent in Maasholm (669 inhabitants), although it could score 11.2 percent in larger towns, such as Oldenburg with 10,000 people. Husum was in Dithmarschen, the “hot bed” of rural discontent, since the 1920s. A youth branch of the NPD was apparently founded in Oldenburg. The party planned to participate in the Landtag election of April 1967 and awaited election results in Bavaria and Hessen, areas with right-wing pockets. The CDU report indicated that the most likely candidates to vote for the NPD were disgruntled Liberals (FDP).

---

113 Rundschreiben Nr. 29 und Bericht über die NPD, ACDP 03-006 141/2.
Timothy Alan Tilton and Heinz Sahner, among others, tried to unearth which farmers might be tempted to vote or even join the NPD. Tilton believed the “marginal upper-class farmers,”115 perhaps on the west coast (i.e., a traditional area of extremism) were vulnerable. These might be livestock owners, but not necessarily those with considerable land holdings. Because of the richness of the soil and good-quality grassland, they could raise prize herds of cattle for dairy and beef markets. In the past, they would have enjoyed affluence and a lifestyle that benefitted from hired hands on the farm, which freed many farmers from day-to-day operations to pursue politics. With the cost of labor rising, many had to return to their farms and accept social decline. Their ability to dominate local politics as Honoratioren (local notables) waned. As persuasive as Tilton’s socio-political profile of likely NPD voters may be, it is difficult to corroborate beyond anecdotal evidence. After all, the secret ballot makes it impossible to reconstruct a complete profile of the NPD voter.

Some thought the CDU was too smug. Timothy Allan Tilton interviewed Günther Flessner, president of the agriculture chamber, in the early 1970s.116 Flessner believed the CDU had failed to prepare farmers for the pressures of European integration. Before the September 1962 Landtag elections, the Schleswig-Holstein CDU sent a one-page mass letter to farmers, asking for their support.117 It enumerated the problems farmers faced including tight labor, costly investment, difficult prices, uncertainty amidst European integration, and the market distance

115 Tilton, Nazism, 126.

116 Tilton, Nazism, 111.

117 Bauernbrief vom 31.8.1962, ACDP 03-006 066/1. It was signed by all the major conservative agro-politicians in Schleswig-Holstein, Kai-Uwe Hassel (minister president), Claus Sieh (agriculture minister), Detlev Struve (head of the Farmers’ Association), Peter Jensen (president of the agriculture chamber) and Hans-Jürgen Klinker (chair of the agriculture committee in Landtag). An attached page shows how thousands of copies of this letter were sent to all the districts of the Land.
issue. Nevertheless, the party felt it unnecessary to “waste our breath to convince you, the farmer, that you are in good hands with the CDU.”118 The letter included a tacit assumption that CDU and farmers were natural allies.

One important arena in which to gauge the social impact of structural change on rural communities in Schleswig-Holstein was the Lutheran Church. Theologian Hans Asmussen’s claim that “Schleswig-Holstein is not religious, Holstein even less so than Schleswig”119 notwithstanding, the Lutheran Church and agriculture did approach one another on how to cope with structural change.

A typical occasion to symbolically link the church to agriculture was the celebration of Thanksgiving. For example, Federal Agriculture Minister Schwarz, Schleswig-Holstein’s Agriculture Minister Engelbrecht-Greve, and farm leader Struve attended church services held in October 1965.120 The ceremony involved conveying a wreath to a church. In 1966, Minister President Lemke spoke on the occasion of Thanksgiving in a 650-year old church in Bad Bremstedt, stressing agriculture’s role as pillar of the state (staatserhaltende Bedeutung).121 Agriculture was a locus of stability amidst the dizzying changes of urbanization in postwar West Germany. He thanked the rural youth group (Landjugend) for fashioning the harvest wreath and praised the younger generation for being both sensitive to tradition and open to innovation in

---

118 Wir meinen deshalb auch nicht, viele Worte nötig zu haben, um Sie davon zu überzeugen, daß die Landwirtschaft auch in der Zukunft bei der CDU am besten aufgehoben ist.

119 Cited by Varain, Parteien, 97. “Schleswig-Holstein ist unkirchlich, Holstein mehr als Schleswig.”

120 “Erntedankfest 1965,” Das Bauernblatt 19 Nr. 41 (October 9, 1965), 3823.

121 “Erntedankgottesdienst der Landesregierung,” Das Bauernblatt 20 Nr. 41 (October 8, 1966), 3932.
farming. Other Thanksgiving celebrations brought together women from the cities and farms to
acquaint each with the challenges its counterpart faced.\textsuperscript{122}

Beyond formal occasions such as harvest festivals, the church aimed to take pastoral care
(Seelsorge) to the countryside. The pages of Das Bauernblatt indicate that Bishop Wester, with
the approval of the synod in Schleswig-Holstein, delivered a presentation on agriculture and the
church’s role.\textsuperscript{123} He wrote that modern farmers stood under impossible pressure to perform
(nicht zu bewältigende Leistungsforderung). In this way, farm work had come to resemble
industry work, which the clergyman declared to be unavoidable. Modern farming required
greater mental effort and spiritual strength (geistiger Fähigkeit...sittlicher Kraft) than before.
Most interestingly, Wester claimed that adjusting to the demands of modern farming required
insight “which is not to be found in traditional thinking” (die aus den Quellen traditioneller oder
idealistischer Gebundenheit zu gewinnen ist). He ended his presentation by claiming that the
church recognized agriculture’s special needs and demands.

The brief article did not specify what the church could bring to farmers, but the
comments of the Evangelical Church at the national level suggest a possibility. A pamphlet
published in 1965 described the “reorganization of agriculture as a social duty.”\textsuperscript{124} This
document categorizes fifty topics under four large themes, including “God’s task for us in
changing society,” “problems in agricultural development,” “duties,” and “the church in the
countryside.” The foregoing discussion on the CDU and the Protestant church indicates that
certain “givens” could no longer be taken for granted. The CDU’s hold on farmers did not go

\textsuperscript{122} “Erntedank in Windbergen” and “Stadt und Land bei gemeinsamer Erntefeier,” Das Bauernblatt 20 Nr. 41 (8
October 1966), 4118-19.

\textsuperscript{123} “Die kirchliche Aufgabe auf dem Lande,” Das Bauernblatt 18 Nr. 47 (November 14, 1964), 3928.

\textsuperscript{124} Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (ed.), Die Neuordnung der Landwirtschaft in der Bundesrepublik
Deutschland als gesellschaftliche Aufgabe (Berlin, 1965).
unchallenged, and a supposedly traditional institution such as the church stood for modernization, such as cooperative farming. Structural change and European integration were putting old alliances and assumptions under severe strain.

Turning back to the NPD, the CDU committee in May 1966 decided that it would be best to treat the NPD with caution (Zurückhaltung) and to respond to its agitation with “hard-nosed questions” (daß man ihre Vertreter auf Sachfragen festnagelt). The report concluded with examples of NPD rhetoric, declaring that this party used the same propaganda that the National Socialists had in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Nothing in the report indicated that the NPD had special attraction for farmers, however.

West German agriculture’s unrest and search for new political friends occurred amidst the deep transformation of German national politics from 1966 to 1969, turning away from Union hegemony to the Grand Coalition. With the SPD on board, farmers’ demands found fewer sympathetic ears for protection and had less confidence in the CDU’s ability first as a weaker coalition partner and then as an opposition party to protect farmers’ interests.

In 1967 elections, the NPD scored more than 7 percent in Dithmarschen and 5.8 percent in Schleswig-Holstein as a whole, and thus sent five delegates to the Landtag.125 On the whole, support for the NPD in Schleswig-Holstein was substantially lower than in parts of Bavaria, Hessen, and Lower Saxony. Heinz Sahner, studying voting results of more than 1,200 municipalities in both Land and federal elections in the late 1960s, believed this relatively low support was due to the unusually strong position of the CDU.126 However, his findings regarding the political culture of the countryside were ambivalent: although the NPD fared poorly, the

---

125 Tilton, *Nazism*, 112.
CDU was rooted in the same areas where the NSDAP had flourished in the 1930s. Had voters been transformed from National Socialists to Christian Democrats? As a Protestant Christian, bourgeois, and conservative “Sammlungspartei,” the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein appears to have largely inherited the same group of people who voted for the German Conservative Party (DNVP) during the Weimar Republic, which the National Socialists siphoned off in the late 1920s. In the late 1960s, Sahner found that, instead of the NDP drawing voters from conservative bloc as had happened thirty years earlier, the liberals (FDP) lost many voters to the NPD. Nevertheless, Sahner detected a positive correlation between farmers and the NPD. Sahner’s stated purpose was to continue and expand Rudolf Heberle’s classic voting “ecology” study from the 1930s. Heberle found pronounced affinity for the NSDAP in farming communities where monoculture prevailed. Sahner modified this result. In the 1960s, the NPD scored relatively strongly in agricultural areas where specialization and poor sales (Absatzkrisen) occurred, such as for certain grain farmers. Accordingly, the NPD secured a following in Oldenburg (East Holstein), Lauenburg, and certain areas of Dithmarschen. Sahner qualified his findings. The NPD’s brief rise was not solely due to disgruntled grain farmers; local problems, strong personalities, and other intangible factors were also important. The NPD performed better in the western marshes and eastern hills than the relatively poor central moor. Thus, we can agree with Patel’s hunch that the fear of economic and social decline drove many farmers to vote for

---

127 Sahner, Politische Tradition, 129.
128 Heberle, Landbevölkerung, 103.
129 Sahner, Politische Tradition, 74.
130 Hans-Deiter Klingemann, studying Heilbronn, confirmed the importance of a candidate’s personality in shaping farmers’ votes, Bestimmungsgründe der Wahlentscheidung. Eine regionale Wahlanalyse (Meisenheim am Glan, 1969).
the NPD more than anything else.\textsuperscript{131} Tilton believed the single greatest difference between the Weimar and Bonn Republic for farmers was that they were or at least felt trapped on their farms in the earlier period, whereas they had options to leave agriculture in the 1960s.\textsuperscript{132} Anecdotal evidence supports his supposition. For example, Friedhelm Müller from the town of Heidkamp recalled in a 1998 interview that he was able to pursue sideline farming (\textit{Zuerwerb}) starting in 1975 while also working as milk inspector (\textit{Milchleistungsprüfer}).\textsuperscript{133} Friedhelm and his wife, Helga, decided doing so was preferable to increasing the size of the farm. They wanted to make sure their son received a good education, and they could not countenance burdening him with a larger farm as an inheritance. The couple recalled certain contempt for this job from other farmers, but the Müllers had the last laugh because many other farmers went bankrupt.

The “Rehwinkel era” (1959-1969) in agrarian politics in West Germany reflected his personality and leadership style: a gruff, demanding, confrontational advocacy of agricultural interests. This style bore resemblance to Weimar-era activism, minus the violence and, certainly in Schleswig-Holstein’s case, the lack of outlet into the irresponsible politics of anti-Semitism. In the early 1960s, farmers may have used similar rhetoric (the “emergency action groups” were invented in the Weimar Republic) and familiar symbols (the black flag of protest), but the threat to West German democracy was minimal. The farm lobby managed to contain unrest and disaffection. Of course, in contrast to the Weimar Republic, no radical alternative existed for farmers in the NSDAP.

\textsuperscript{131} Patel, \textit{Europäisierung}, 366.

\textsuperscript{132} Tilton, \textit{Nazism}, 141.

\textsuperscript{133} Transkription eines Interviews it Helga und Friedhelm Müller in Heidekamp am 19. April 1999 Kreisarchiv Stormarn, S. 100 Nr. 93/94, 1-66, here 43-44.
The episodes with Kaczenski and the NPD are important because for revealing how the farm lobby dealt with internal criticism and disagreement regarding structural change. Did farm leaders respect democratic conventions? Rehwinkel, Struve, and others constantly reiterated the need for farmers to stand as a unified group. The further agriculture shrank, the more it needed to band together. Although it was not always made explicit, the lesson learned from the Weimar Republic was that desertion of conservative political parties and the farm lobby only led to fragmentation (*Zersplitterung*), making farmers easy prey for radicals, be they the NSDAP, demagogues such as Kaczenski, or the NPD. From the viewpoint of outsiders such as Kaczenski and Thies Christophersen, traditional political parties and the farm lobby had become too traditional and devoted to specific interests, such as the full-time professional farmer who raised grain crops. But what about the “ordinary” farmer, struggling to keep his family together and unable to afford big tractors that came with structural change? The NPD was an ephemeral political phenomenon in northern Germany, indicating that, for all its weaknesses, traditional political parties such as the CDU and the farm lobby were farmers’ only viable support for coping with structural change and European integration.

### 4.5 Structural Change in Dairy Farming

Some agro-politicians in Schleswig-Holstein made concerted efforts to adapt to structural change instead of resorting to irresponsible politics. One area in which this occurred was dairy farming. Although grain is important as a basic commodity, the beef and dairy industries were important for Schleswig-Holstein. Unlike for grain producers, the prospect of common prices was advantageous for beef and dairy farmers because negotiators in Brussels consistently tended

---

to favor higher prices for both commodities. The Schleswig-Holstein Farmers’ Association, similar to their Dutch neighbors who also pursued livestock agriculture, were interested in keeping grain prices low. How did structural change and political developments in Schleswig-Holstein’s dairy agriculture fit within larger national and supranational frameworks in the 1960s? What special challenges in structural change did this Land confront?

First, we should consider the great number of mergers in dairy farming. From 1954 to 1964, more than 100 of 450 dairies were purchased by or merged with others.¹³⁵ Some agronomists, such as Professor Dr. E. Woermann (Göttingen), believed that lowering grain prices would eventually exert downward pressure on prices for products derived from animals.¹³⁶ However, most farmers did not feed their cattle with wheat, barley, or rye, the prices of which were bitterly contested by the Federal Republic from 1960 to 1964. Cows were fed a mixture of regular fodder (Grundfuttermitteln, such as grass, hay, corn, and cabbage) and concentrated feed (Kraftfuttermitteln).¹³⁷ Lobbyists who claimed that grain and milk or beef prices were inextricably intertwined were oversimplifying. At a 1965 “farmers’ congress” in Oldenburg (East Holstein), Woemann noted how difficult setting a common price for milk at the EU level would be. French farmers received 32 Pfg/L, while Italian farmers received 41.6 Pfg/L. In the spring of 1965, considerable uncertainty still surrounded dairy agriculture within CAP. Would the EU adopt or dispense with the West German practice of distinguishing between drinking milk (Trinkmilch) and milk used for processed goods (so-called “Werkmilch)? West German farmers


obtained a result somewhere in between. Fresh milk prices were not subject to intervention but fluctuated according to the laws of supply and demand. Processed milk, such as in powdered form, had set prices. Milk subsidies would need to be eliminated by 1970 on the national and Land levels. Woermann recognized that for medium and small farmers, the price of milk was more important than the grain price, which dominated the headlines.

Numerous issues in Schleswig-Holstein’s agricultural development surface in the historical sources, including advances in science, the problem of “distant markets” (Marktferne), new marketing schemes to boost sales of dairy products, and above all the prevalence of small operations. Structural plans to improve dairy farming from 1966 to 1969 deserve attention precisely because they sought to facilitate closures and mergers (Stillegung und Verschmelzung). These topics illustrate how profoundly structural change in agriculture transformed a way of life.

One of the characteristics of structural change in Schleswig-Holstein’s dairy farming was the influence of science and technology to increase milk yields. Considerable advances had been made in veterinary care, as Dr. Tilgner’s presentation to the agriculture chamber described on March 24, 1958. The director for the Veterinary Institute said about 30 percent of farmers’ income in Schleswig-Holstein came from dairy products.

Increasing demands for hygienic milk production compelled farmers to join many organizations. Dairy farmers could not claim proud independence but were inextricably part of a


139 Ibid, 25.

140 LAS Abt. 721 Nr. 2308 (Landwirtschaftskammer), 79-82.

141 Dr. Tilgner, “Bericht über die Entwicklung der Arbeit im Institut für Tiergesundheit,” LAS Abt. 721 Nr. 2308 (Landwirtschaftskammer 1952-1959), 1.
web of government agencies, animal clinics, and regulatory commissions. In the decade since the founding of the Federal Republic, the number of dairies and cows registered with Tilgner’s veterinary clinic in Kiel rose from 433 and 34,000 to 468 and 393,000, respectively. Annual inspections, tests of milk quality, and immunizations against common diseases such as tuberculosis increased appreciably. Some farmers might have balked at the increased regulation, but, as Tilgner hastened to point out, many of the clinic’s services were provided free of charge.

Veterinary care improvements are significant as an indicator that overproduction, which became a serious problem, was not the sole result of farmers’ stubbornness to offset lower prices with increased volume. Even if the size of cow herds decreased slightly in the 1960s, each cow produced more milk, partially due to better care. Sound considerations for efficiency could lead to undesirable overproduction. Farmers were justifiably proud of the advances made in eradicating bovine diseases, which was a collaborative effort among researchers, veterinarians, farmers, and the government. However, this solution carried the unforeseen consequence of increasing milk yields per cow and exacerbating the surplus problem. Government incentives to combat diseases often continued long after their original purpose was fulfilled. Agricultural experts downplayed the problem of over-production and signaled their postwar tendency to think in terms of scarcity by noting that “one or two poor harvests” would put an end to the “problem” of overproduction. They never tired of pointing to hunger in third-world countries either.

The notion of “distant markets” is perhaps surprising because the city of Hamburg bordered Schleswig-Holstein. Production was so great that the city could not absorb it all. Furthermore, Denmark was also an agricultural exporter. Neighboring Mecklenburg-


143 E.g., Dr. Witt, „Die Veredelungswirtschaft,“ *Gesunde Landwirtschaft*, 143. He made this comment in 1965.
Vorpommern lay off limits in East Germany. If Hamburg bought 10,000 tons of butter from Schleswig-Holstein dairies in 1960, then the remaining 20,000 tons would have to be sold in the Ruhr, Berlin, or even more distant markets.\(^{144}\) For a perishable good such as milk, market distance was certainly a problem. The prospect of European integration meant that Schleswig-Holstein had to compete with other dairy regions such as those in the Netherlands and France, in which experts claimed that high transport costs and distances would put Schleswig-Holstein at a disadvantage. Struve could only welcome his profession’s (Berufstand) suggestion to produce in quantity, standardize, and offer quality goods, though these measures alone would not negate the Dutch and French competitive edge (Wettbewerbsvorsprung).\(^{145}\) Market or competitive “distortions” (Verzerrungen) emerged as a recurrent term that farm advocates used to justify price supports and subsidies. Interestingly, once some recognized that price supports alone could not rectify the income gap, the argument was made that renewed supports were necessary on the European level to protect CAP against distortions on the world market.\(^{146}\) At a CDU agro-political conference in Rendsburg in late November 1963, Agriculture Minister Engelbrecht-Greve stated that livestock, dairy, and all other animal husbandry (tierische Veredelungsprodukte) offered the best chance to offset the problem of market distance because products such as beef, milk, or eggs promised the highest monetary return per hectare at the lowest transportation cost (bei möglichst hohem Geldertrag je Flächeneinheit die geringsten

\(^{144}\) Alex Gloy et al, *Der Weg in die EWG*, 30.


\(^{146}\) *Die Neuordnung der Landwirtschaft in der Bundesrepublik*, 16. “So bleibt ein wirksamer europäischer Außenhandelschutz angesichts der Preisverzerrungen auf den Weltagrarärmkten erforderlich.”
Transportkosten verursachen).\textsuperscript{147} The use of such language revealed the minister as a hard-nosed economic realist, dispensing with the agrarian myth.

As usual, price-support mechanisms were the silver bullet to offset the alleged disadvantage of “distance to markets.” If the grain price issue took center stage in national and European-level agrarian politics in the first half of the 1960s, then the rough equivalent for Schleswig-Holstein was the “milk Pfennig” (Milchpfennig). One Pfennig was paid in subsidy for every kilogram a farmer produced in 1962; a second was introduced in 1964. The funds came from the Land treasury. From 1964 until European market regulations entered into force four years later, the combined federal and Land subsidy amounted to 6.4 Pfg/kg. The two “Milchpfennige” cost the Land tens of millions of DM.\textsuperscript{148} In 1963, government support for dairy products stood at 5.75 Pfg/kg: 3.75 Pfg from the Green Plan and 2 Pfg from Schleswig-Holstein’s coffers.\textsuperscript{149} The SPD objected to the second Pfennig, preferring to direct funds to streamline dairy structures instead of providing yet more incentive to overproduce. However, just as Rehwinkel fought a bitter rearguard action to prevent the German grain price from being lowered, Schleswig-Holstein’s Agriculture Minister Engelbrecht-Greve put “saving the milk Pfennig” at the top of the agenda in a meeting in February 1966.\textsuperscript{150} At the European level, the Christian Democrats in this Kiel meeting stood behind the federal government in demanding a

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{147} „Trotz der Marktferne kann der schleswig-holsteinische Bauer rentabel wirtschaften,“ Agrarpolitischen Konferenz der CDU in Rendsburg (25.11.1963), ACDP 03-006 088/2.
\bibitem{148} Thiesen, \textit{Es begann}, 131.
\bibitem{149} „Produktionsgebunden oder produktionsneutral: Die Milchpfennige,“ Das Bauernblatt 17 Nr. 51/52 (December 24, 1963), 3969.
\bibitem{150} Niederschrift über die Agrarausschusssitzung der CDU Landesverband Schleswig-Holstein Kiel (4.2.1966), ACDP 03-006 088/2, p.1-2, here 2.
\end{thebibliography}
common price of 39 Pfennig/kg. Cutting the milk Pfennig would jeopardize the unavoidable adjustment process (Anpassungsmaßnahmen) because it would keep ailing farms on life support. Structural change, particularly modernization, came to Schleswig-Holstein’s dairy agriculture in another significant form: marketing. Ernst Engelbrecht-Greve, Claus Sieh’s successor as agriculture minister made it his business in the late 1960s to reinvent the business dimension of agriculture, taking a cue from modern marketing, sales, and advertisement. In June 1963, he raised marketing with farmers, saying that West Germans could learn from their Dutch and French colleagues. They had better “horizontal and vertical integration” of dairies with processing and sales centers. That is, dairy farmers, delivery services, and merchants were connected more seamlessly. In a Landtag address that November, he prioritized “marketing and sales strategies” (Marktpflege und Absatzförderung). He advocated for introducing ever more stringent demands for quality dairy products. In the case of milk, this primarily meant increased fat content. If farmers wanted to sell their milk in specially marked cartons attesting to quality, then they often had to change the breeds of milk cows and the fodder, with all the expense that entailed. Despite the problem of overproduction and the family farm, both remained cornerstones of Engelbrecht-Greve’s tenure. Even so, the number of dairies fell from 473 to 159 from 1962 to 1972.

Other important marketing schemes were designed to make Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture competitive in the throes of structural change and European integration. Using special tags or labels (Gütezeichen), particularly for dairy and beef, was a hobbyhorse of Engelbrecht-Greve’s tenure. Even so, the number of dairies fell from 473 to 159 from 1962 to 1972.

151 “Landwirtschaftsminister Engelbrecht-Greve auf der Mitgliederversammlung,” Bauernblatt 17 Nr. 23 (June 8, 1963), 1775-78.
152 Thiesen, Es begann, 121.
153 Thiesen, Es begann, 132.
Greve and his deputy Kammerdirektor Dr. Kurt Zühkle. Starting in the late 1950s, he had devised ways of marketing Schleswig-Holstein by stamping a small map of the “Land between the seas” on various products. At the November 1963 meeting of the agriculture chamber, he trotted out his marketing ploy as an indicator of quality.\textsuperscript{154} His arguments were formulated against the backdrop of optimizing production according to market demands. Farmers’ tried-and-true methods had to yield to consumers’ wishes. Zühlke asserted that the laws of supply and demand still applied in the EU. He was confident that products with tiny maps of the Land would draw tourists’ attention while they visited Baltic and North Sea towns, particularly in the summer months. As Engelbrecht-Greve emphasized, this marketing scheme would be one important way for Schleswig-Holstein to cope with European integration. Putting products on shelves with a little green map of the Land would raise awareness of and appreciation for this region’s agricultural products.\textsuperscript{155} Agricultural products from Schleswig-Holstein would come to be associated with quality and reliability.

Proposals for improving dairy structures from committee meetings in the late 1960s within the agriculture ministry offer a glimpse into structural change. Schleswig-Holstein was a leading producer of milk, but its processing methods (Verarbeitungsstufe) were still relatively backward, as was recognized in the late 1960s.\textsuperscript{156} The prevalence of small- to medium-sized farms and annual fluctuations in delivery were signs of this underdevelopment. As already

\textsuperscript{154} Hauptversammlung der Landwirtschaftskammer (November 21, 1963), LAS Abt. 721 Nr. 2307 (Landwirtschaftskammer 1960-1968), 52-58.


\textsuperscript{156} Minister für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forstes des Landes Schleswig-Holstein (ed.), Strukturplan zur Verbesserung der Meiereiwirtschaft in Schleswig-Holstein (Kiel, 1969), 8.
mentioned, mergers were underway at this time, but it was unclear whether they were undertaken with sufficient speed. The government would intervene to expedite the process.

As Struve explained at the “farmers’ congress” of March 1965 in Oldenburg (East Holstein), the driving force behind subsidizing structural improvement, which most often meant simply increasing the size of holdings, was to prepare German agriculture for the Common Market.\(^{157}\) Only to those operations whose production reached a certain threshold \((\text{Mindestmenge})\) received premiums. In the case of milk, this threshold was also subject to quality control. Struve recounted that the Union took the lead for this threshold to be included in the Green Plan against SPD resistance. Because barely two years were left before CAP entered force on July 1, 1967, structural change increasingly became a zero-sum game. Pressure mounted to privilege certain farms at the expense of others. Government agencies were left to develop eligibility criteria and investigate which farms were entitled to support.

A set of documents pertaining to constructing a new butter processing facility in Hohenwestedt provides evidence for this situation.\(^{158}\) Dr. Neitzke, director of a milk research facility in Kiel, advised rapid closure and consolidation of dairy facilities “in order to prepare Schleswig-Holstein’s dairy industry for the EU.”\(^{159}\) His feasibility study centered on determining what structure and organization of the dairy industry would promise the most economic return

---


\(^{159}\) Ibid, “Es darf allerdings keine Zeit verloren werden, die Milchwirtschaft in SH für die zukünftigen Wettbewerbsverhältnisse zu rüsten.”
(Rationalisierungserfolg). Director Neitzke thought that running two operations instead of thirteen was best.

Complementing federal Green Reports and Plans, each Land was to compile situation reports (Bestandsaufnahme) for fund allocation. Larger-scale studies paralleled Neitzke’s to determine eligibility and optimize agriculture for Europe. As the agriculture ministry wrote in early 1969, there would be less focus on the price of milk than supplying the market in accordance with its demands (marktgerechtes Angebot). In late September 1967, an official from the federal agriculture ministry attended a meeting to clarify whether operations would receive aid from Bonn or from Brussels.

On April 21, 1967, the “Committee for structural reform in dairy farming” (Sturkturbeirat der Milchwirtschaft) met for the first time. Officials from the agriculture ministry, research institutes, and the agricultural cooperative Raiffeisen convened to discuss fundamental issues (Grundsatzfragen) affecting structural change in dairy farming and how best to assist districts in planning future consolidations. Because 90 percent of delivered milk came through cooperatives, including their representatives on the committee made sense. Farmer’s Association members were conspicuously absent, although representatives had attended a December 1966 meeting. They raised no objections to a committee that no longer included

---

160 Strukturplan zur Verbesserung der Meiereiwirtschaft, 10.


162 Raiffeisen was responsible for short- and medium-term loans for farmers, rendered technical assistance, and organized rings for agricultural machines.

163 Lorenzl, Die Vermarktung von Molkereiprodukten, 175.
They were excluded from this important forum for planning and implementing structural change because committee members were to be experts (Sachverständigen) with no vested economic interest in the changing structures (keine wirtschaftliche Bindung zu den Strukturobjekten haben).

The basic problem the committee tackled was volume. In 1964, more than 85 percent of all dairies in Schleswig-Holstein delivered less than 5 million kilograms of dairy products annually; the federal figure stood much lower at 66 percent. Officials considered delivery thresholds of less than 10 million kilograms an inefficient throwback to small-scale agriculture. Agrarian scientists deemed the prevalence of small farms a major structural flaw in Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture. Members of the structural committee offered their expertise when farmers contemplated leaving agriculture or fusing their operations into larger conglomerates. As official pronouncements (Verlautbarung), the committee’s plans oriented farmers to the future. The committee noted that initial reluctance (zögernder Bereitschaft) had made way for growing acceptance (wachsender Verständnis) that structural change was unavoidable. To whom did the committee refer? The language is no clearer than “in general” (Allgemein ist festzustellen). In any case, committee members unanimously agreed that they needed to establish criteria (Vorrangkriterien) to prioritize which farmers would receive financial aid from the government. Committee meetings were occupied with deciding how to shut down or fuse

---


165 Lorenzl, Die Vermarktung von Molkereiprodukten, 154.

166 Ibid, 157; Eine Strukturverbesserung der schleswig-holsteinischen Molkereiwirtschaft macht mithin erhebliche Rationalisierungsmaßnahmen notwendig.

167 Strukturplan zur Verbesserung der Meiereiwirtschaft, 4.
operations, with decisions to subsidize “leading” operations (*Leitbetriebe*). Modern, large, well-run centers typically received federal and state aid. For example, the only facilities for powdered milk production receiving aid had to produce at least 15 million kilograms annually.\(^{168}\) Meetings were regularly occupied with compiling appraisal reports (*Gutachten*) that members made at various dairies to determine which ones should be fused, shut down, or otherwise modified.

Whereas national agrarian politics focused on emotive issues such as the family farm, negotiating structural change at the *Land*-level meant making difficult decisions based on performance and economic criteria.

Some social consequences of these planning meetings emerged in August 1967. The committee strove to use *Land* funds to assist retiring farmers (*aus Landesmitteln eine Beihilfe zu gewähren*). Those farmers leaving at 45-55 and 60-65 years of age were to receive the equivalent of one year (*Jahresgehalt*) of their previous income, and those age 55-60 would receive six months’ pay.\(^{169}\) Otherwise, little of the human factor in structural change emerges in government documents. A study from 1966 indicated that a major problem in merging diary cooperatives was members’ reluctance to part with the familiarity and atmosphere of trust in small operations.\(^{170}\)

Committee meeting records are an enlightening historical source because the language of structural change used was relentless. The phrases “maximize capacity,” “increase efficiency,” “profit margin,” “minimum threshold,” but above all “shut down” (*Stillegungen*) appear constantly in these pages. Officials from the Interior Ministry from Kiel descending upon farms with “efficiency” on their lips and a host of cost-cutting measures

\(^{168}\) *Strukturplan zur Verbesserung der Meiereiwirtschaft*, 18


\(^{170}\) Lorenzl, *Die Vermarktung von Molkereiprodukten*, 175.
(Kostendämpfungsmaßnahmen) left farmers intimidated and overwhelmed.\textsuperscript{171} Committee meetings reveal the remarkable degree to which local government was involved in shutting down and consolidating dairies throughout the Land through the withholding and granting of subsidies. The “Soviet zone” may have been a favorite target for Bauernblatt articles, whereas West German farmers were held up as paragons of private enterprise. Government planning, centralization, coercive labor reassignment, and quotas all made their mark in terms of dairy farming. Large centralized institutions like the Butter and Egg Office (Butter- und Eierzentrale Nordmark) was the reality, regardless of the myth of the small independent Bauernhof.\textsuperscript{172} Indeed, drafts of the structural plan reveal that the minimum amount of milk produced annually required for federal funding was raised to discourage new facilities from being created.\textsuperscript{173} The extremely detailed maps and charts indicating milk production, turnover, and proximity to cities suggest that the market was saturated and demand for milk quite inelastic.\textsuperscript{174} Spatial planning and distribution of dairies (Raumordnung) around city centers became a delicate balancing act. Although little sense of the social effects of these changes emerges from the records, in the case of parceling out market areas among competing firms, committee members called for the input


\textsuperscript{172} This institution was itself a product of fusion of milk and egg concerns in 1947. It’s main function was to “improve market shares for private and cooperatively-owned dairies” (die Marktstellung ihrer Mitglieder verbessern). This could mean intervention buying of butter or selling milk in different Länder (Berlin and the Ruhr in particular) to keep prices artificially stable. Thiesen, Es begann, 165. See also “Seit 75 Jahren am Markt,” Bauernblatt 18 Nr. 50 (December 12, 1964), 4293-95.

\textsuperscript{173} Kleiner Strukturausschuß, 8. Sitzung (April 10, 1967) LAS Abt. 721 Nr. 7412. One of the committee members suggested raising the minimum from 10 to 20 million kilograms annually.

\textsuperscript{174} For example, it was suggested to have operations that produced powdered or skim milk sign contracts to avoid infringing on each other’s trade areas (Vereinbarungen zwischen den Werken über die Abgrenzungen ihrer Einzugsgebiete); Kleiner Strukturausschuß 11.Sitzung (5.5.1967), LAS Abt. 721 Nr. 7412, p.2.
of managers (Betriebsleiter). The village dairy (Dorfmeierei) stood in the way of progress, and the government worried even in the late 1960s that Schleswig-Holstein had the highest proportion of mixed farms (Gemischtbetrieben) in the Bund. The committee meetings illustrate how structural change in the dairy industry proceeded: small village dairies producing for their surroundings gave way to large centralized operations which produced for the Land, the country, and even for the EU. An extremely complex web of main and subsidiary production centers was the result. Dairies that produced milk, yoghurt, cheese, and butter became a thing of the past. Instead, each center focused on certain products.

The last chapter and previous sections demonstrated the centrality of the “family farm” (however one defined it) in agrarian policy. The smaller the farm, the larger the proportion of income came from livestock and pastoral farming (Veredelung): beef, pork, poultry, and dairy. Family farms depended heavily on the income accruing from these areas. By 1960, “family farm” in Schleswig-Holstein often meant only husband and wife working on the property. There were astonishingly few sons and daughters still working alongside. Researching at the level below national agrarian policies is a salutary reminder that, for all the rhetoric about the Bauernhof, the mystique of the family farm held little attraction for the next generation at the Land level.

175 Sitzung des Strukturbeirates am 11.9.1967, LAS Abt. 721 Nr. 7412, „Für die Abgrenzung der einzelnen Märkte ist es erforderlich, daß die Betriebsleiter der Marktmeiereien gehört werden.“

176 Strukturplan zur Verbesserung der Meiereiwirtschaft, 12.

177 Niederschrift über die Sitzung des Agrarpolitischen Arbeitskreises der CDU, Landesverband SH, 12.4.1966, p.1-14, here 2. „Hierbei ist festzustellen, daß der prozentuale Anteil dieser Einnahmen mit abnehmender Betriebsgröße steige, d.h., daß insbesondere der Familienbetrieb auf die Einnahmen aus der Schweine- oder Geflügelhaltung angewiesen sei.“

178 Gloy et al., Der Weg in die EWG, 16. A family farm was traditionally defined as a farm which could support at least two people as full-time employment. Ulrich Planck, Der bäuerlicher Familienbetrieb. Zwischen Patriarchat und Partnerschaft (Stuttgart, 1964).
Interviews provide a more complete picture of the effects of structural change in dairy farming. Alfred Gatermann, interviewed in 1999, worked for Lüttal, an agricultural machine producer in the 1960s. He witnessed the “demise of dairies” (*Meiereisterben*). The delivery system changed. Because fewer dairies operated, many farmers could no longer deliver a few canisters of milk to them by horse and wagon, as had been done earlier. Instead, dairies sent trucks on regular schedules, no longer as sensitive to the fluctuations in cows’ milk production. Above all, traditionally-minded farmers, remembering the hunger years, could not abide waste. However, if health inspectors disapproved tests of milk’s cleanliness or freshness, nothing could be done with the flawed products but discard them.

Gisela Voß (born 1938) recalled in a later interview how agriculture and indeed village life in Jersbek changed completely during the 1960s. She described her work as “everything, milking everything” (*alles, melken, alles*). New machines hardly reduced the workload, and for most women, household gadgets and amenities such as refrigerators were lower priorities than field equipment. She recalled how many small farmers with three to five cows gave up their farming, how related professions, such as smiths, disappeared, and that the village became filled with commuters who would have nothing to do with local festivals and customs. A similar ambivalence pervades the interview of Irma Judt, also from Jersbek. Farm women were glad to have vacuum cleaners but sad to see so many farms sold, consolidated, or transformed into housing complexes. True, women had no longer to carry so many heavy milk canisters and travel by horse and wagon to the dairy, but they were uncomfortable with not knowing where their

---


180 Transkription einem Interview mit Gisela Voß, Jersbek, am 3 Juni 1999, Kreisarchiv Stormarn, S 100 Nr. 115, 1-65.

181 Zeitzeugengespräch mit Irma Studt, Jersbek, 6.Mai 1999 Kreisarchiv Stormarn, S. 100 Nr. 60, 1-34, here 16.
products went. They perceived structural change as regrettable but unavoidable. These women’s attitudes toward change were probably softened by the thirty-year gap between the events and their interviews. The old-age pensions certainly reduced the sting of structural change.

The few left in farming had to be “good businessmen” (guter Geschäftsmann). As a rule it was older, less-educated farmers who regarded structural improvements in dairy farming and land reconsolidation (Flurbereinigung) with hostility. Carl Schulz recalled that fault lines could often run between father and son. Disagreements arose about issues such as whether to sell horses, purchase tractors, or allow the farmland borders to be redrawn. Farmers and families began to see and make use of the benefits from the Green Plan and funds “from Brussels.” For example, Ewald Schacht recalled that one of the most noticeable effects of structural change were improved asphalt roadways.

The Land government acknowledged complaints in a 1969 booklet released by the agriculture ministry. According to the booklet, those objecting to state-directed planning on the grounds of free market principles had to remember that the state had taken it upon itself to disburse funds to facilitate structural change. It stood to reason that these funds were allocated “intelligently.”

The previous sections have tried to illuminate the manifold ways of reacting to ongoing European agricultural integration. Farmers and their leaders could protest, threaten to desert...
staunch allies, such as the CDU, or they could streamline operations as best they could.

Scholarship\(^{186}\) has focused on radical politics and national-level polemics, but an even more dramatic picture emerges from considering the *Land* level. In the span of a decade, the number of dairy farms plummeted in Schleswig-Holstein, demonstrating the “quiet revolution” affecting the countryside. For all the considerable economic and social effects of structural change in dairy farming in Schleswig-Holstein, the political echo was remarkably muted. The measures Engelbrecht-Greve and others sought to implement in Schleswig-Holstein’s dairy industry were remedies to an insoluble problem. Milk production is a “classic case of inelastic supply confronting inelastic demand.”\(^{187}\) Farmers in the Dithmarschen area on the west coast were hard-pressed to limit production, much less change occupations. The area was optimized for dairy farming and had few other options. Repackaging dairy products in the form of milk, cheese, yogurt, and kefir and using special labels were desperately inventive ways of increasing consumers’ demand for these products, but broadening the range of dairy products did not prove to be a silver bullet.

### 4.6 Conclusion

In the 1960s, structural change continued in the Federal Republic. By decade’s end, 300,000 fewer farms operated, the agricultural workforce declined from 3.4 to 2.1 million, and the average farm size increased from 9.3 to 11.7 hectares.\(^{188}\) The transformation of agriculture in


\(^{188}\) Wilson and Wilson, *German Agriculture in Transition*, 84.
Schleswig-Holstein over this period left some optimistic and some pessimistic. Attitudes further polarized as European integration took more concrete shape.

Schleswig-Holstein stood better equipped to handle European integration than most of its agro-politicians cared to admit. Having sketched out how CAP worked, analysis of two major issues in agrarian politics, prices, and the family farm revealed that the farm lobby clung persistently to mentalities ill-suited for structural change and integration.

The decade leading up to the full implementation of CAP (1957-1967) was the high water mark of the “Green Front” in West German Bundestag and agro-politics as a whole. With the DBV playing the leading role, Bonn essentially bowed down to the farm lobby’s wishes and pursued protectionist price policies.\textsuperscript{189} On the European level, Bonn dragged its feet in agreeing to lower relatively high German prices, playing the spoiler role in European integration. The DBV successfully played the Union against the FDP to ward off structural change in the form of painful price decreases. The honeymoon ended when the French forced Chancellor Erhard to choose between pandering to the farmers and integration. West German farmers still won promised payout money (\textit{Ausgleichszahlungen}). To anticipate, when these funds were not forthcoming, the farmers protested in 1968.

National-level agrarian policy-making did not necessarily register or reflect what concerned individual \textit{Länder}. For a time it appeared as though the CDU’s unquestioned hold on farmers was slipping, particularly in northern Germany. Farm leaders flirted with the extreme rightist NPD, and the farm lobby had to face “emergency action” groups (\textit{Notgemeinschaften}) of farmers unhappy with the DBV’s results. These emergency groups recalled the late 1920s, when lobbies’ control over farmers slipped. Crises revealed fault lines within the farm lobby, raising

\textsuperscript{189} As pointed out by Kiran Klaus Patel in several articles.
questions of how truly its leaders represented the breadth of interests within a diverse field.

However, the alternatives proposed by political mavericks such as Kaczenski and extremist parties such as the NPD were no better at tackling structural change and integration. The final section on dairy industry reveals that the speed and magnitude of change need not lead to despair and political radicalization. Mentalities shifted, however painfully.

These changes were due to political and social or economic factors. With the accelerated timetable of European integration and the major domestic political realignment with the Grand Coalition from December 1966, in which farmers received less sympathy from the SPD, both agricultural agencies in the government and the farm lobby finally accepted structural change as an unavoidable fact and heeded the necessity to adjust the conditions of production instead of merely artificially boosting farmers’ income. This shift lead to a “changing of the guard,” that will be discussed in the next chapter. Rehwinkel, Stuve, and Jensen, all in their late sixties, stepped down from leadership positions by 1970. They made way for the younger generation, which was often more entrepreneurial. They and agriculture ministries came to see that integration could carry benefits. Milk was a good example:

When a common milk price was negotiated in spring 1966, German farmers stood only to gain, because historically a majority of countries in the EEC granted an even higher price for this commodity than Germany. Indeed, the price agreed upon in July 1966 was one Pfennig per liter higher than what German farmers had hitherto received.¹⁹⁰

Europeanization, if anything, strengthened bonds between the farm lobby and West German government agencies, particularly the agriculture ministry, to ensure that farmers’ interests were adequately represented in Brussels.¹⁹¹ This approach did not necessarily dilute the

¹⁹⁰ Kiran Klaus Patel, “Europeanization à contre-coeur: West Germany and agricultural integration, 1945-1957” Kiran Klaus Patel (ed.), Fertile Ground for Europe? The History of European Integration and the Common Agricultural Policy since 1945 (Baden-Baden, 2009), 139-160, here 150; see Bundesarchiv Koblenz, B 136/8319.

¹⁹¹ Hendriks, Germany and European Integration, 147.
relative importance of Ländere farm associations within the national DBV. After all, farm representatives from Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony, and Bavaria sent their own delegates to COPA meetings. The stronger bonds between farmers and the federal government assured continued integration of farmers within the political framework of the Federal Republic. The more the bureaucracy expanded and regulations grew, the more the average farmer was dependent on the lobby and government agencies. The myth of the “independent Bauer” was becoming just that.

Turning to changing social patterns, the “Seven-Year War” over the grain price and centrality of farmers’ income in agrarian debates in the 1960s concealed a great irony. During this time period, farmers were changing from peasants (Bauer) to agronomists (Landwirt). As Gisela Hendriks succinctly summarized:

His profession was valued according to productivity and the contribution of farming to the economy as a whole rather than by its prestige as a carrier of particular virtues. Thus the farmer began to develop a Statusangst, which was due more to the loss of social and political importance than to unsatisfactory incomes.192

The section on dairy farming and farmers’ memories of the 1960s depict this transformation. Being “industrious” (tüchtig) was no longer sufficient. To survive, a farmer and, increasingly, his wife, needed education, business acumen, and a willingness to take risks. Ironically, by focusing on prices, the family farm, and related issues, the lobby contributed most to the “de-mythologization” of agriculture. Farming was becoming “just business.”

192 Hendriks, Germany and European Integration, 148.

5.1 Introduction

For all the undeniable dislocation of agricultural structural change during the early and mid-1960s, its dimensions never seriously alienated most farmers either from the federal government or the burgeoning EU. Protesters numbered in the thousands, not tens or hundreds of thousands. However, this changed by the end of the decade. By the late 1960s, negotiations in Brussels over prices for key commodities, such as milk and beef, threatened to accelerate structural change so that gradual political accommodation and economic adjustment could no longer be considered “business as usual.” Economic and performance criteria determined farm eligibility for state support, attacking traditional family farms that had been the cornerstone of West German agrarian policy since the late 1940s. The axiom that anyone who wished to remain in farming could do so no matter the economic rationale of his or her homestead no longer held true.\(^1\) Consequently, from 1968 to 1973, the most widespread agrarian protest in Germany since the Great Depression erupted.

In this chapter, I investigate the causes, venues, and consequences of protests. What does protest reveal about structural change and farmers’ integration into West German democracy by the late 1960s? To answer these questions, I explore the following themes: comparisons to the

---

\(^1\) Thiesen, *Es begann*, 194.
1920s and the student movement of 1968, farmers’ perceived enemies, shifting central dogmas about structural change within the changing farm lobby leadership, and indicators of farmers’ modernity. I follow a thematic approach for the 1968-1971 period, during which agriculture dominated the headlines at the regional, national, and European level with unusual frequency. I first discuss protest in Schleswig-Holstein to explore comparisons to the 1920s and 1968 student movement and then turn to the most important targets of farmers’ animus, the “Green Dollar” and Mansholt Plan. The narrative extends to the early 1970s, when Schleswig-Holstein’s farm lobby seemed to break away from the national farm lobby. Finally, I discuss the changing leadership of the farm lobby. I have chosen these topics to highlight the continuities and ruptures in farmers’ political culture. I argue that protest in the latter period proved farmers understood and accepted democracy’s “rules of the game” and that farmers were largely well integrated into the political fabric of West Germany, in contrast to their status within the Weimar Republic.

I use protest as a venue to investigate the relationship between political language and behavior. Some key themes that repeatedly surfaced included the “sacrifices” (Opfer) farmers had made since the mid-1940s to put West Germany back on its feet, the complementary feeling of being cheated or lied to (Wortbruch) by the government when funds promised by the previous administration were not forthcoming, and the various “fighting measures” (Kampfmaßnahmen) that were in the farm lobby’s arsenal. These word choices shed light on farmers’ social standing and historical role in West Germany, the legitimacy of the government in farmers’ eyes, and the types of protest deemed acceptable, respectively.

5.2 Protest in Early 1968
The early 1960s slogan “grow or make way” (wachsen oder weichen) became “grow or get out” by decade’s end. Economic performance threatened to dislodge the intangible social-moral concept of the family farm from policy, which soured the hitherto relatively harmonious relations between the farm lobby and governments on Land and federal levels. This was the case particularly when the new Grand Coalition under Kurt-George Kiesinger announced cuts in the agricultural budget in 1967. For example, in a rally in Dortmund on March 7, 1967, 30,000 farmers, including approximately 600 farmers from Schleswig-Holstein, condemned budget cuts as a breach of promise (Wortbruch). The farmers’ feeling that they had been left in the lurch by the government was a leitmotif. As Patel correctly indicated, the positions of the West German government and the farm lobby on agricultural integration were no longer congruent after 1967. Federal Agriculture Minister Hermann Höcherl and his successor, Josef Ertl, were booed and hooted at during conventions.

The Federal Green Report that Höcherl delivered in spring 1968 provided much of the ammunition for rural unrest. The report deemed agricultural incomes comparable to those of craftsmen (Handwerk). The income gap between the two had risen from 32.5 percent in 1966-67 to 34.3 percent in 1968. However problematic comparing incomes between these two occupations may have been, farm lobbyists latched onto the magic percentage (i.e., 34.3 percent) in their placards and signs during marches. Although Chancellor Kiesinger appeared to take unrest seriously in his “Report on the Nation” (Bericht über die Lage der Nation) in March, he did not curry favor by comparing structural change in agriculture to mining and declaring that

---

2 See Chapter 4, particularly page 33.
3 Bauernblatt 1967, 652; Thiesen, Es Begann, 196.
4 Patel, Europäisierung, 379.
5 Kluge, 40 Jahre vol.2, 60.
some would have to leave both occupations. The green lobby located statistics that compared their profession to others but then criticized politicians for making similar comparisons.

The protests in Schleswig-Holstein must be seen in a national context. From November 1967 through 1968, numerous protest demonstrations took place in Lower Saxony, Baden-Württemberg, and Bavaria motivated by similar factors: discontent about prices, particularly for milk, beef, and sugar beets, and irritation with Bonn for lobbying energetically enough for high commodity prices in Brussels. The wider perspective prevents taking the Schleswig-Holstein farm lobby at its word that their situation was particularly dire. For example, in portions of Bavaria where partible inheritance prevailed, the plethora of small plots and lack of industrial centers to offer alternative employment moved Minister Höcherl to deem sideline farms (i.e., those even smaller and less lucrative than part-time farms) as “the real problem child of agricultural policy.” This attitude contrasted strongly with that of Schleswig-Holstein’s farm leader Hans-Jürgen Klinker, who thought large full-time farms should be the main concern for politicians. Structural change was arguably less severe in the far north than in other areas of the country, but Schleswig-Holstein stood out as a hotbed of protest, which requires explanation.

Farmers wanted a guarantee that their earnings would at least cover the costs of production, however (in)efficiently they managed their farms. The farmers and their advocates reiterated that agriculture was an integral part of the economy, particularly in the more rural Schleswig-Holstein, and that farmers were the bedrock of a healthy, balanced society. Although emphasizing how important agriculture was to the food processing industry was partly a tactic to

---

6 Kluge 40 Jahre vol.2, 64.

7 For a brief summary of the national context, see Kluge, 40 Jahre vol.2, 56-57.

demonstrate that the farmers’ plight affected others, it also indicates farmers’ integration in the Federal Republic. During a protest in Schleswig in late March 1968, the chief of the Flensburg district farmers’ association assured representatives of the West German radio (Deutschland-Funk) that farmers had always been a “pillar of the state” (staatstragendes und –erhaltendes Element) and would continue to be so.\(^9\) Granted, the farm lobbyist was telling listeners what they wanted to hear. Even so, the very assertion of farmers’ integration in the nation-state made it less likely that farmers would resort to extreme measures such as supporting the NPD. Emphasizing the many links between agriculture, foodstuffs, and industry narrowed the realm of the politically possible.

Rather than moving to the extreme right, farmers’ advocates sought more mainstream allies. Edmund Rehwinkel built bridges to industrial interests. President of the Deutschen Industrie- und Handelstages Ernst Schneider, honored Rehwinkel’s efforts in September 1967, declaring that traditional animosities between agricultural and industrial interests were relics of worldviews long outdated.\(^10\) Rehwinkel also sought to build bridges to the Social Democrats and managed to convince the SPD to agree to cost-oriented agrarian policies. Social Democrats courted farmers for not solely altruistic reasons. During the party convention in Nuremberg in March 1968, the SPD declared that farmers’ angst and concern for their economic future was due to growing mistrust for those politicians who, in the past, too often made extravagant promises to win the farm vote.\(^11\) The SPD was only too happy to gain new voters by cultivating agrarian discontent. Their dark warnings were effective. The agriculture committee of the CDU in

---

\(^9\) “Nicht die Lust am Demonstrieren treibt uns auf die Straße,” Bauernblatt 22 Nr. 11 (March 23, 1968), 1012-14, here 1013.


Schleswig-Holstein, meeting in November 1969, expressed concern that the SPD might steal
their voters.  

Rehwinkel’s overtures to both industry and the SPD puts his flirtation with the NPD in an entirely different light. He was first and foremost for farmers, party politics be damned. With a shrinking clientele, Rehwinkel could not afford to be choosy about his political allies. From 1957 to 1967, the number of those employed in agriculture fell from 4.8 million to 3 million. Once a sizable minority in the Bundestag, the number of delegates with a background in agriculture now dropped to only forty. Warnings of impending radicalization of farmers by Rehwinkel and others were blackmail to pressure the Union, FDP, and even SPD to take farmers’ demands seriously.

In February and March 1968, waves of protest surged through Schleswig-Holstein. The farm lobby’s motto in Schleswig-Holstein was the bland “justice for farmers, too!” (Gerechtigkeit auch für die Bauern)—a feeble imitation of the feminist and civil rights movements occurring at this time. Themes that repeatedly surfaced included the breach of trust between the Grand Coalition and agriculture; the centrality of price policies in agrarian policy; the denial that “radical” right-wing elements had infiltrated agriculture; the discrimination against agriculture for federal aid compared to other sectors, such as mining; and above all, the peaceful democratic character of farm protest.

For price policy, the lobby fought a bitter rearguard action against the lowering of grain prices. However, in their advocacy for a return to pre-1967 prices, the lobby sought to make

---


13 discussed in chapter 4, esp. p.35.

14 Patel, Europäisierung, 363.
friends rather than confront enemies and anxiously assured consumers that the price of their beloved breakfast rolls (*Brötchen*) would not increase. In earlier periods in German history, producers and consumers were pitted against each other as enemies. Now farmers were trying to enlist city-dwellers’ support.

The language of protest bears examination. Some of the signs held up in Husum and Neumünster were typical: “*Dutschkes sammeln sich zuhauf – Bauern krepeln sich die Ärmel auf;*” “*Erhard legte uns ans Messer – Kiesinger macht es nicht besser*” and “*Höcherl, Schiller und die Swien sünd de Buern sin Ruin.*” Farmers styled themselves as hard working and responsible, in contrast to students, who were rioting at Rudi Dutschke’s instigation. They simplified their protest by blaming individuals, such as Federal Agriculture Minister Höcherl and Federal Economics Minister Schiller, rather than the system of parliamentary democracy itself for their woes. Farmers’ protest culture was characterized by strong, sometimes extreme, language, whereas their behavior remained “respectable,” and legal.

---

15 “Schleswig-Holsteins Bauern fordern ‘Gerechtigkeit auch für uns,’” *Das Bauernblatt* 22 Nr. 9 (March 2, 1968), 700-05. “Dutschkes are all over the place while farmers work,” “Erhard puts us under pressure and Kiesinger is no better,” Höcherl and Schiller are swine, bringing farmers to ruin.”
Farmers’ attire presents another angle for analysis of “bourgeois respectability.” Pictures of the March 1968 protests in Schleswig-Holstein reveal men dressed in suits and hats (see Figure 4).

Farmers’ clothing bears strong similarity to the previous generation in the late Weimar Republic. Figures 5 and 6 display farmers assembled in the same place (Heide Town Square) in 1928 and 1968, respectively.
Figure 6 (Bauernblatt March 9, 1968)
Perhaps it is coincidence, but both protests occurred in early spring, necessitating trench coats and hats. The photos reveal the strong continuity in how farmers presented themselves to the rest of society. Farmers were just as keen in 1968 to appear as “respectable” Bürger as their predecessors had been forty years earlier. A similar self-stylization can be seen when farmers were indoors. Consider Figure 4. A suit and tie was the uniform for members of the property-owning, self-employed middle-class. Although many farm income brackets were quite low, wearing a suit and tie was a way for farmers to distance themselves from the student movement. Although farmers protesting in other parts
of West Germany may well have dressed in overalls (i.e., their work clothes), more continuity with earlier periods existed in Schleswig-Holstein at least, as Kiran Klaus Patel noted. Farmers were less interested in appearing “modern” or dressing similar to factory workers, for instance.

Another fact displayed in Figure 4 that is worth mentioning is that the audience is overwhelmingly male. Margot Musfeldt, a 27-year old farmer, wrote to the Bauernblatt in April 1968 offering her opinion why there were “demonstrations without women.” Her answer was simple: It was impossible for both husband and wife to leave the farm at the same time. Women’s daily chores made her “indispensable” at home (Die Frau in ihrer täglichen Arbeit ist unabkömmlich). Margot claimed that men, in fact, supported women’s independence (Unabhängigkeit). She accompanied her husband to various farm inspections (Betriebsbesichtigungen), noting, however, that she was the only woman in attendance.

The Bauernblatt’s portrayal of gender relations in rural areas is highly misleading. In 1968, 70 percent of young women in rural areas rejected the idea of marrying a farmer. This statistic is a salutary reminder that structural change assumed important social and economic dimensions. Many farmers had to abandon their way of life because they were unable to find a spouse interested in their livelihood. If a farmer was married, then it was still uncertain that his son or daughter would be interested in maintaining the farm. The few women participants in Schleswig-Holstein protests is another indicator of continuity, indeed conservatism, in protest culture. In each issue of the Bauernblatt, women were granted a token few pages (Die Seite der Landfrau), in which the most common articles dealt with recipes, child-rearing, and related

---

16 Patel, Europäisierung, 476.
17 “Warum Demonstrationen ohne Frauen?” Das Bauernblatt (April 6, 1968), 1247.
topics. Their role and visibility within agriculture was tightly circumscribed. Patel noted changing advertisements in agriculture journals from Bundeswehr advertisements in the 1950s to young, beautiful women endorsing tractors in the early 1970s, but this change could also easily support the conclusion that the farm press objectified women as it indicated “modern” sales strategies.

Studying farmers’ language reveals how their politics oscillated between tradition and modernity. As in the Weimar Republic, farmers’ frequently couched protest rhetoric in terms of a vague affirmation of the nation-state without explicitly referring to democracy. For example, in March 1968, all 64 districts of Lower Saxony’s Landvolk held a vote (Urabstimmung) on whether to boycott (Kaufenthaltung) purchases of agricultural production and even daily necessities. This form of political activism harkened back to the Weimar Republic and even the early 1950s, as we saw with the “Milk War.” The district chairmen wrote an open letter to Chancellor Kiesinger, warning him against “driving certain sectors of society that affirm the existing order (staatsbejahenden) to adopt radical measures out of desperation” (Verzweiflungsmaßnahmen). The term “staatsbejahend” seemed to imply that most farmers felt integrated into the Federal Republic because similar language was used in the early 1950s during the “Milk War” (see Chapter 3). Whereas farmers’ commitment to democracy in Schleswig-Holstein in the 1920s was thin, it was better established by 1968.

Paul Ackermann and Kiran Klaus Patel have accurately pinpointed the political culture of farmers in distinguishing their rhetoric as declamatory rather than explicitly democratic and that by using language of farmers as “pillars of the state” (staatstragenden), farmers’ mentality leaned more toward corporatist (ständisch) ideals and patriarchal rather than participatory,

---

20 Kluge, 40 Jahre vol.II, 57.
liberal-democratic structures. Farmers unwittingly dated themselves by using such residual language from Imperial and Weimar days. The boycott threat was an old weapon in the farm lobby’s arsenal. The case of district farm leaders presuming to speak for their communities was a vestige of the “politics of notables” (Honoratiorenpolitik). However lukewarm their acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the state might have been, it at least contrasted with the more radical elements of the student movement.

Farmers could not forge links with the student movement attacking the “system”—a powerful target precisely for its vagueness—lest they resurrect the vicious anti-parliamentary activism of the bad old days in Weimar. The farm lobby’s challenge was to present their clientele’s grievances as serious enough to grab society’s attention while assuring everyone that farmers were loyal to the democratic order.

The last and most important fact to consider is the role of political violence. In this instance, Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture eschewed this form of activism, distinguishing themselves from both their forbears in the 1920s and their contemporaries in France, Belgium, and Italy. The destruction of property and mass dumping of milk to which French farmers resorted never was an option in Schleswig-Holstein or West Germany. In 1951, West German farmers sought to withhold the supply of milk from the market and even threatened to attack milk delivery convoys. Nearly twenty years later, the situation had changed. Indeed, violence made little sense if a farmers’ slogan at a protest in Bremen on March 18, 1968 was “We are protecting our property!”

---

21 Ackermann, Der Deutsche Bauernverband, 96; Patel, Europäisierung, 368.

22 As pointed out in Patel, Europäisierung, 485.

23 Thiesen, Es begann, 210.
An important symbol of the farm protest of the 1920s—a flag with a black field, a white plow and red sword—briefly appeared in the late 1960s. It had two meanings: first, spontaneous but marginal rural protest beyond the control of the lobby, denying the legitimacy of the state and second, a rare espousal of political violence, mostly due to the riot between farmers and police which broke out in August 1928 in Neumünster. Although a far cry from waving a swastika, in agricultural circles the black flag was provocative enough. Peter Petersen of the NPD wrote to the *Bauernblatt* editors, claiming that his colleague, well-known political radical Thies Christophersen, had unfurled the flag at reporters’ behest. Minor scuffles occurred among farmers, radicals, and the police over it. Whatever the case may have been, this symbol became something of a joke in the media. Several local newspapers mentioned that the black flag and the NPD made a rather sorry appearance at farm protests, but this gesture toward radicalism had barely registered. Onlookers refused to accept flyers and pamphlets from the “emergency committee” (*Notgemeinschaft*) of the NPD. There was no threat of violence. This case demonstrates a change in political culture that occurred in rural Schleswig-Holstein. Neither farmers nor politicians seemed haunted by a “Weimar complex”\(^25\) and, by eschewing political symbols such as the black flag, demonstrated that they no longer expected radical politics to achieve their goals. Instead of representing a serious political alternative, the black flag was nothing more than a media stunt for zealous photojournalists. The “marriage of iron and rye” from the Second Reich, political violence from the Weimar Republic, and the “blood and soil” ideology of the Third Reich were gone, never to return. The flag and all it stood for had fallen

\(^24\) “Schleswig-Holsteins Bauern fordern ‘Gerechtigkeit auch für uns,’” *Das Bauernblatt* 22 Nr. 9 (March 2, 1968), 700-705. The article that follows reproduces local newspapers’ coverage verbatim.

\(^25\) Ullrich, *Der Weimar-Komplex*. 237
outside the realm of the politically “thinkable, utterable, and doable.” Farmers in West Germany were too dependent on the federal government for subsidies to risk the jump to illegitimate political parties and too dependent on European markets to reverse integration. It made no sense for an embattled minority to seek alliances with fringe groups.

How did “ordinary” farmers view the protests? In this case, we still have to rely on the Bauernblatt. Ernst Kruse, a farmer from Nortorf, interpreted the demonstrations as occasion to remind farm representatives to display more backbone in Brussels. They were obligated to be the toughest negotiators on farmers’ behalf.

During the Landtag election campaign in 1972, farmer Andreas Thomsen met with Franz Josef Strauß, who came to speak in Schleswig-Holstein. Thomsen was also the head of the Young Farmers (Jungbauern) in Südtondern and organized the meeting with the finance minister and notable local farmers to discuss the situation. He subsequently reflected on the meeting in his memoirs. In Thomsen’s words, “At that time, the situation was bad for agriculture, but from today’s vantage point things were much better back then.” In any case, similar to so much of the politics at the highest levels, this discussion among a small group of farmers and politicians revolved around the price of grain and milk. As a farmer with a large herd of pigs, Thomsen noted that “an old and reliable rule” held that the price of pigs was intimately tied to that of grain. Regarding milk, it stood at 36 Pf/L since 1967, whereas the cost for fertilizer and feed had

---

26 Karl Rohe, “Politische Kultur: Zum Verständnis eines theoretischen Konzepts,” Oskar Niedermayer and Klaus von Beyme (eds), Politische Kultur in Ost- und Westdeutschland (Berlin, 1994), 1-21, here 1. Karl Rohe is one of the leading experts on the concept of political culture.

27 Of the dozens of interviews I collected in Stormarn, interviewees had little to nothing to say about the late 1960s.

28 „Leser schreiben uns: Ruinöser Wettbewerb?” Bauernblatt 22 Nr. 12 (March 23, 1968), 1021. „Das war und ist der Sinn der bäuerlichen Demonstrationen, um hier die gewählte Vertretung an ihre Pflicht als härteste VerhandlungsPartner verstärkt aufzufordern.“

29 Ibid, 160.
risen by 30 percent. Thomsen and his colleagues pleaded with Strauß to do his best for higher prices. Thomsen noted sadly that even two years later, in 1974, the price was still the same. Strauß could do nothing, Thomsen fumed.

Thomsen’s story is a useful corrective to the tendency of protest to oversimplify matters. For all the change of the mid- to late-1960s, powerful traditions still held. To house his expanding pig herd, Thomsen built a new stall and silo, which cost 15,000 DM. He borrowed 12,000 DM to finance this project. Heavy borrowing, so often a cause for concern among agropoliticians, could just as easily indicate entrepreneurial spirit and a willingness to take risks. At the beginning of 1966, Thomsen’s father stepped down as mayor of their village, and his son ran for office and won. That he considered his election both an entitlement and a foregone conclusion is surely a clear-cut case of “politics of notables.” To further emphasize the point, Thomsen was also elected to the church council of directors. In 1967, his farm became a learning facility (Lehrbetrieb) where trainees sent by the agriculture chamber could learn agriculture. Added help and a 48-HP tractor eased the work for Ingrid, Thomsen’s wife, as he recounted.

Thomsen’s detailed memoirs reveal the complexity of structural change, which resulted in a gradual change in political culture. We see the process of an educated, entrepreneurial farmer expanding and modernizing his operation, while presiding over his village’s politics, church, and associational life. The slogan of “grow or make way” (wachsen oder weichen) is too simplistic to capture this situation. Farmers such as Thomsen had one foot in the “traditional” world and one in the “progressive” world, suggesting that farmers were largely integrated into the dynamics of West Germany’s politics and society. They kept abreast of the latest innovations, were aware of the outside world, and met with important figures, but they still were members of cooperatives, the fire brigade, and church groups. Studying protest is useful because

30 Thomsen, Die Thomsen’s von Rückenstadt, 152.
it offers acute points of friction and rupture in structural change. However, by needing to
simplify their messages and actions to mobilize support, protesters tended to over-simplify
structural change.

The Farmers’ Association officially held that the protests were effective in alerting the
government and public to farmers’ plight. At the spring meeting of the Schleswig-Holstein
Association, Hans-Jürgen Klinker noted positively that the Bundestag debate regarding the
Green Report demonstrated politicians’ willingness to accede to farmers’ demands, and that the
Commission agreed to keep milk and beef prices up.\(^{31}\) Delegates from the CDU, FDP, and SPD
in the Bundestag had all scrambled to create proposals to meet farmers halfway. However, some,
such as Helmut Schmidt, were rather stern with the farm lobby, admonishing it to render the
complex issues of agricultural integration comprehensible to city-dwellers.\(^{32}\) Moreover, Schmidt
explicitly warned Rehwinkel not to allow farmers to fall into the hands of “rat-catchers”
(Rattenfänger) such as Thies Christoffersen in the NPD in Schleswig-Holstein.

One result of the protest was the DBV’s formulation of its “Leading Principles for
Structural Policy” (Leitsätze zur Strukturpolitik), published in June 1968.\(^{33}\) Its centerpiece
contended that structural policies could not take the place of a sound pricing system. Those
prices must be commensurate with the costs, the farm lobby stated. DBV acknowledged
structural change as a fact, but qualified it by saying, “This transformation can only be achieved
by means of coordinated policies (price, market, social, tax, and structural) to avoid further social
dislocation (weitere soziale Erschütterung).”\(^{34}\) The main point of structural policies should be to

\(^{31}\) “Es muß noch viel geschehen,” Das Bauernblatt 22 Nr. 7 (April 13, 1968), 1296-99, here 1296.

\(^{32}\) “Viele schöne Versprechen,” Das Bauernblatt 22 Nr. 11 (March 16, 1968), 901-05.

\(^{33}\) Deutsche Bauernkorrespondenz 21 Nr. 11 (June 15, 1968).

\(^{34}\) Ibid.
secure the livelihood of farmers, their families, and anyone working in agriculture. The DBV pleaded for infrastructure improvements that considered regional particularities and increased consultation and advising services. Its renewed demand for a cost-oriented price policy elicited a strong rejoinder from a leading agrarian politician, Staatssekretär Rudolf Hüttenbräuker (FDP). Retiring early from the federal agriculture ministry for health reasons in spring 1968, Hüttenbräuker did not hesitate to criticize the faults in agrarian policy. He deemed the DBV’s call to throttle agricultural imports as “illusory” and cost-covering prices as “unrealistic.” Cutting back on imports and “commensurate” prices were standard fare in agricultural protests. High prices did little for producers except lower demand, as had been the case with drinking milk. Although the DBV reiterated its position over the years, the government was no longer willing to sign on to its demands carte blanche.

Agricultural protest in 1968 in Schleswig-Holstein remained safely democratic in its language and behavior. There were clear contrasts with both the 1920s and the student movement of the late 1960s. However, the farm lobby was still unwilling to fully embrace the realities of structural change, entrenching itself behind its old position of political accommodation and gradual economic adjustment.

5.3 Green Dollar as the “Root of All Evil?”

The two central issues in agrarian protest in the late 1960s suggest a relationship between structural change and European integration. The former related to how prices were set and the latter to the future of the family farm. Increasing the value (Aufwertung) of the Deutsche Mark was a major concern for most farmers in 1968 and 1969. In committee discussion of the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein, Struve declared that measures to offset the disadvantage incurred by

35 Kluge, 40 Jahre vol.2, 67.
revaluation was an “existential” issue for farmers.36 Although West German agrarians often played the spoiler role in European integration, they were enthusiastic proponents of the single currency. Prices were set according to complex formulas based on the gold-backed 1960 US dollar. For example, if the relatively weak franc was devalued (as actually occurred in August 1969), then German farmers stood to lose more money. The DBV damned the “Green Dollar” as the cause of all the problems (*Grundübel aller Schwierigkeiten*).37 Despite what leading politicians like Hüttenbräuker might say, agrarian experts in Schleswig-Holstein were convinced that better prices for grain fodder and beef would overcome overproduction, which was a result of revaluing the DM.38

The value of the DM was raised by 9.29 percent on October 26, 1969. Chancellor Brandt declared that it was his administration’s goal to achieve full employment. If this involved assistance to help the unemployed find new work (*Umstellungshilfen*), then so be it. “This is meant above all for agriculture. We are ready to help.”39 True to his word, Brandt met farm lobby leaders five times in the first eighteen months of his administration. But there were certain elements on which he could not budge. In late January 1971, he met farmers in the far north of Schleswig-Holstein (Flensburg) and, while taking their concerns to heart, declared that the Green

---


37 Bauernblatt 1969, 4067.


39 Cited by Kluge, 40 Jahre vol.2, 111.
Dollar was sacrosanct.40 The decision to peg agricultural prices to this unit of account had been made by a previous administration, represented a certain “leap of faith,” and, if jettisoned, would have “serious consequences on general developments in Europe.” The DBV resorted to its trusted apocalyptic rhetoric. In a meeting with Brandt the day after the currency revaluation, lobbyists feared a loss of income amounting to 2 billion DM, “casting doubt on the further existence of farmers.”41

The effect of the revaluation of the DM and devaluation of the franc, coming so close upon each other, on agriculture should not be underestimated. As Patel pointed out, once the French devalued their currency, free trade no longer technically existed within the EU member countries. CAP was no longer in effect.42 During a session of the DBV presidium, farm leader von Feury exploited this fact, saying that the EU “is still very far away from any economic union.”43 The whole premise of the Green Dollar was wrong, he asserted. Although generally toeing the line of the national farm lobby, voices in Schleswig-Holstein also called for moderation. Agriculture Minister Engelbrecht-Greve asked that the unit of account be at least temporarily suspended until appropriate compensatory mechanisms had been devised. He requested that compensation not be frittered away in structural or social welfare items. The Commission met immediately and the “Luxembourg Compromise” was reached, granting agriculture a six-week grace period to allow prices to settle back into parity. Brandt announced that agriculture would continue to receive funds from tax revisions and the ECC to balance

40 Gespräch Bundeskanzler Willy Brandt mit Vertretern der schleswig-holsteinischen Landwirtschaft am 23.1.1971 in Flensburg. Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Bundeskanzleramt, B 136 Nr. 8638.

41 Ibid; Der Existenz der deutschen Bauern ist in Frage gestellt.”

42 Patel, Europäisierung, 405.

incomes, but the association was skeptical. Even as late as 1973, Struve thought the price relationships governed by the Green Dollar were unfair for German agriculture.\textsuperscript{44}

By repeatedly falling back on such “existential” language, agrarians assumed that farming was a valuable occupation, quite apart from any economic considerations. They also calculated that such language would achieve something. The DBV mobilized immediately against this decision by calling a committee together. A special fund of 5 million DM was set aside for protests, distributing flyers, and other “fighting measures” (\textit{Kampfmaßnahmen}).\textsuperscript{45} Reducing the complexity of agriculture’s woes to only the Green Dollar issue was similar to blaming individual politicians on placards during a protest rally. Lacking another way to mobilize farmers, given their diverse interests, the “Green Dollar” played a significant role in the lobby’s rhetoric.

\textbf{5.4 The Mansholt Plan}

Protest in Schleswig-Holstein occurred in the context of nationwide unrest, and Mansholt’s plan proved that the 1960s was the heyday of “planning.” The Höcherl and Schiller plans were two examples for agriculture. If “active price politics” (i.e., lobbying in Brussels to raise prices) was not possible, then Höcherl tried to improve farmers’ standing from the supply side of the equation. He encouraged “aggressive” marketing and advertising campaigns to get products moving. As described in Chapter 4, this approach dovetailed with Schleswig-Holstein’s efforts to develop its image as a “breadbasket” (or “milk bottle”) of the country by stamping a green image of the \textit{Land} on its produce. Höcherl wished to see agro-tourism play a greater role in incomes. Economic Minister Schiller was interested in treating rural areas in a more holistic way

\textsuperscript{44} “Ein Leben in der Politik,” Das Bauernblatt 27 Nr. 19 (May 12, 1973), 1654-55.

\textsuperscript{45} Thiesen, \textit{Es Begann}, 221. See Also “Der Grüne Dollar muß sterben,” Das Bauernblatt (November 15, 1969), 4424. The money was raised by collecting 1 DM from each member of the DBV.
than merely improving infrastructure for agriculture. If creating jobs meant decentralizing industry to rural areas and thus drawing people away from agriculture, then so be it. The common theme to emerge was the precarious state of the family farm, which must either change significantly or be abolished altogether. To be eligible for subsidies, farms would have to demonstrate that they were run rationally and economically. Whatever any individual plan might entail, one detail was certain: money would be tight. The federal government reckoned with cuts to the green budget amounting to 800 million DM from 1969 to 1972.  

In this context, former Dutch Minister of Agriculture and ECC Commissioner Sicco Mansholt advocated for more emphasis on structural policies in October 1967. He thought subsequent measures needed to take regional particularities into account. In the end stages of the transition period, the looming overproduction of milk, sugar, and certain wheat products became clear. Mansholt aired his ideas on February 16 1968 in Groningen. The Commission reacted early with a reform program, outlining its goals under the heading “Agriculture 1980” in a memorandum at the end of 1968. The basic points of the reform initiative were as follows: creating alternative sources of income for those who wished to leave agriculture, restructuring production toward larger units (fusions), reducing arable land by 5 million hectares, freezing prices until overproduction would disappear. When he stepped down as federal agriculture minister in 1969, Hermann Höcherl admitted that agrarian politics for the previous two decades had been nothing but “stopgaps” (Übergangslösungen). Mansholt’s Plan in contrast tried to completely revamp farm policy in member countries.

---

46 Kluge 40 Jahre vol.2, 76.


48 Cited by Thiesen, Es Begann, 223.
What caused such a furor in West Germany and western Europe was Mansholt’s contention that if the family farm suffered from low incomes, social inequality, and underdevelopment, then it was time to reconsider the hitherto unquestioned desirability of preserving this form of economic organization. Mansholt’s ideal farm was 80-120 hectares, with 4-5 employees. Livestock farmers would have more than 350 heads of cattle, pigs, or other livestock.\(^4^9\) If livestock farmers failed to adjust to industrial methods, “someone will do it for them.”\(^5^0\) This attitude is precisely what CDU politicians in Schleswig-Holstein stubbornly refused to countenance. Industrial-scale animal husbandry mortally threatened the family farm, which for them remained the inviolable basic unit of agriculture for non-economic reasons.

Farmers tended to support the CDU, whereas urban workers tended to prefer the SPD.\(^5^1\) Far from countenancing a drop in milk prices as Mansholt envisioned, farmers in Schleswig-Holstein gave the concept “Made in Germany” (indicating high quality) a new twist. The price should be \textit{raised} to reflect the higher fat content of milk, the indicator of quality.\(^5^2\) Even allowing for the unusually large size of Schleswig-Holstein’s average farm, Mansholt’s target was far beyond it. In fact, his ideal farm roughly corresponded to the size of farms that \textit{Großbauern} such as Struve, Rehwinkel, and Schwarz owned and operated. These were men who had the money, family prestige, and connections to run large farms and be active in politics. How realistic was this for the “average” farmer?

\(^4^9\) Wilson and Wilson, \textit{German Agriculture in Transition}, 85.

\(^5^0\) Cited by Kluge \textit{40 Jahre}, vol.2, 72.

\(^5^1\) So declared delegate Böge sitting on the agriculture committee of the CDU, Niederschrift über die Sitzung des Landesfachausschusses “Agrarpolitik” des CDU-Landesverbandes Schleswig-Holstein am 20.November 1969,” ACDP 03-006 088/2.

\(^5^2\) Entschließung der Landesfachausschuß für Agrarpolitik im Landesverband der CDU (February 20, 1969), ACDP 03-006 088/2.
Although the farm lobby grudgingly accepted gradual structural change and continued emigration of farmers to other professions, it tirelessly advocated that government (at Land, Bund, and EU levels) intercede to ensure that the process was “organic.” This vague concept was difficult to pin down but was certainly unrelated to Mansholt’s “production units” and other technical-economic definitions of agriculture and a pace of change envisaged in years rather than generations.

The Schiller, Höcherl, and other agricultural plans circulating in 1968 had left their mark in Schleswig-Holstein in connection with “organic” structural change. For example, in a CDU convention in June 1969, delegates passed a resolution stipulating that “organic structural change required a targeted regional and economic policy.” Even in this conservative bastion of price-centric agrarian policies, farmers were aware that measures suggested by Social Democrat Karl Schiller, such as regional development, were an important part of structural change.

Perhaps the most important aspect of structural change proceeding in an “organic” manner was its speed. This aspect is precisely what moved Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture minister Engelbrecht-Greve to remark in April 1971 that the decline in farm incomes was not gradual but “precipitous” (nahezu um einen Sturz). The rate at which farmers in Schleswig-Holstein were leaving agriculture for other jobs was double the national average. A central concern for government agencies was the ability to at least shape the contours and speed of structural change. In the eyes of the government, anything beyond orderly and predictable

53 Kluge, 40 Jahre vol.2, 64.

54 Agrarpolitische Landestagung der CDU Schleswig-Holstein am 21 Juni 1969 in Plön, ACDP 03-006 088/2; ‘Ein organischer Strukturwandel bedingt eine zielbewusste Regional- und Wirtschaftspolitik.’

structural change would lead to social dislocation, such as further depopulation of the
countryside and continued population growth in teeming cities.

Mansholt intervened on the old price versus structural policy debate decisively favoring
the latter. Therefore, it is unsurprising that his plan raised an outcry from nearly anyone in
agriculture in West Germany. One of the plan’s provisions was to freeze prices to forcibly
expedite structural change, convincing farmers either to modernize operations or leave farming.
The plan envisaged abolishing family farms in favor of “agricultural enterprises” or, even worse,
“production units.”56 Mansholt’s terminology consciously distanced itself from anything related
to farms as they currently existed. He wanted agriculture to be optimized among the elements of
land, labor, and capital. Farmers in Schleswig-Holstein vigorously opposed his nomenclature,
declaring that it threatened Germany’s “social order” (Gesellschaftsordnung) and infringed upon
farmers’ “property, independence, and sense of responsibility” (Privateigentum, die
Selbständigkeit und das Verantwortungsbewußtsein)—central terms in the agrarian myth.57 What
did “independence” mean in light of massive subsidies and the increasing interconnectedness to
industry, food processing, and research institutes? How could one speak of “responsibility” in
view of decades-long “flight from the land?”

By moving structural measures back to center stage and sidelining price policies,
Mansholt guaranteed a backlash from the farm lobby. His intervention threatened the
fundamental terms of agrarian discourse in West Germany. He dismissed alternatives proposed

---


248
by agrarians as “wrong-headed romanticism” that sought to resuscitate “outdated family farms.”

Bavarian Agriculture Minister Hans Eisenmann thought the “Bavarian path” was better. Instead of increasing the size of holdings into the repugnant “agricultural production units” as Mansholt suggested, there should be a healthy mixture of small, medium, and large farms. The three German EU commissioners agreed to the memo with reluctance. Hans von der Groeben, responsible for competition regulations, thought that the memo lacked “concrete proposals which account for regional particularities.” Groeben wished to know exactly what was supposed to happen to farmers who left agriculture and how structural measures would be adjusted to the demands of each region or Land. Groeben did not merely criticize, but came up with counter-proposals, focusing on infrastructure improvement, creating industrial centers in rural areas and other initiatives to render structural change less disruptive. Bigger was not necessarily always better. In the Weimar Republic, many of the large estates in East Prussia would have gone bankrupt had the government not bailed them out with the so-called Osthilfe. Writing from the perspective of agriculture consultant, H. Puhlmann declared that it was not the farm’s size but the ability and acumen of the farmer that was decisive for success. The legal obstacles, not to mention to the obvious comparison to collectivization in East Germany, would render it difficult to persuade or compel farmers to consolidate, enlarge their holdings, or leave farming. Mansholt ignored these issues in cavalier fashion.

58 Agra-Europe 9 Nr.34 (13 August, 1968), 1-14.
59 Cited by Seidl, Deutsche Agrargeschichte, 97.
60 Cited by Patel, Europäisierung, 430.
Three days before Christmas 1969, the Commission circulated its memorandum “Reform of Agriculture in the ECC.” In its four points for a vision of agriculture with 1980 as the target, the memo preserved Mansholt’s suggestions: first, to establish alternative income for farmers transitioning out of agriculture; second, to increase the average size of farms; third, to reduce the land under cultivation by 5 million hectares in the EU; and fourth, to freeze prices to combat overproduction.

Alarm bells rung in the agro-political network. Höcherl appreciated Mansholt’s effort to address thorny questions and sought to maintain cordial relations with the commissioner, but Höcherl flatly rejected most of his ideas.62 In the Bundestag, only the SPD could find any positive aspects. Controversy over the Mansholt Plan reached its zenith at a well-publicized fracas in Kiel on December 13, 1969. A firm for agricultural machines privately invited Mansholt to speak at the Ostseehalle. Bavarian TV-personality Erich Geiersberger was to host the discussion. Whatever Mansholt planned to say, he was drowned out by thousands of farmers chanting, whistling, and stamping their feet. Schleswig-Holstein’s farm lobby probably thought it could get away with the boycott. After all, in September 1968, the General Assembly for European Agriculture rejected new forms of organization in its “Salzburg Manifest.”63

The event in Kiel invites attention because the widespread coverage and controversy made it impossible for the Farmers’ Association to monopolize it. The Bauernblatt consequently devoted five full pages to “Letters to the editor,” including letters hostile to the DBV’s decision to disrupt Mansholt’s speech. The most important themes that emerged from those letters included who or what was to blame for agriculture’s distress; a comparison to the extra-

---


63 Kluge 40 Jahre vol.2, 74. We cannot be sure of the lobby’s leadership decision-making process. I was denied access to the DBV’s files in Koblenz.
parliamentary opposition of the extra-parliamentary opposition (APO) movement, West Germany, and/or farmers footing the bill for European integration; and concern about dissension in farmers’ ranks.

The “blame game” followed the main line that surfaced in the March 1968 protests in Schleswig-Holstein. Farmers were in trouble, primarily due to the lowering of grain prices in 1967, the revaluation of the DM, and Mansholt’s plans to drop prices for commodities such as milk, sugar beets, and beef. One farmer from Sophienhof declared that Mansholt bore chief responsibility (Hauptverantwortung) for the agrarian policies of the EU, which this farmer deemed “wrong from the beginning.” Farmer Thomsen blamed the overproduction problem, primarily due to the unfavorable import/export balance in West Germany. Agricultural goods flooded the market to benefit German industrial exporters. By reproducing letters from ordinary farmers that offered simple reasons for unrest, the lobby hoped to strengthen its hand vis-à-vis the government.

Comparisons between the student movement and farmers’ hooting, shouting, and whistling for hours on end while Geiersberger and Mansholt played cards on stage contained a tone that ranged from moral outrage to flippant, e.g., “that well-fed grandpas acted like APO-youngsters” (gesetzte Opas benehmen sich wie die APO-Jünglinge). Widespread media coverage of the event ensured that the public standing of farmers’ would plummet further, one farmer complained. Ernst Kühl wrote that the farmers’ protest was a clear case of self-defense (Notwehr) and claimed it was far more disciplined and orderly than “other demonstrations taking place in large cities at the same time.” The common thread running through farmers’ letters

64 Leser schreiben uns: “Das Echo auf den Mansholt Besuch,” Das Bauernblatt 23 Nr. 52 (December 24, 1969), 4876-80.

65 Ibid.
was a negative appraisal of the student movement’s methods. The student actions were irresponsible, whereas the farmers’ actions in Kiel were perfectly appropriate within the spirit of democracy. The letters demonstrated a heightened awareness of media coverage and perceptions of farmers in society.66

Struve himself weighed in, calling the plan “devilish.” Its suggestions would create a situation for farmers in Schleswig-Holstein “worse than the current North American farmer.”67 Attitudes such as this suggest the centrality of the family farm was in the minds of lobbyists and the rural populace. The specter of Soviet-style collectivized farms or sprawling cornfields in the Midwest in the United States were equally frightening. It comes as no surprise that Mansholt’s visions of farms of thousands of hectares and hundreds of animals were immediately and vociferously attacked.

Another common theme was the “cross” farmers had “to bear,” that is, how much they sacrificed (Opfer) for European integration. Sometimes this theme was a thinly veiled appeal to patriotism. West Germany had allegedly “footed the bill” (den Zeche bezahlen) for Europe. The farm lobby, and several individual farmers writing to the Bauernblatt upbraided their politicians for caving in to French wishes to open Germany to French farm produce in exchange for the French purchase of German industrial products. At a CDU convention in late June 1969 in Plön, delegates unanimously declared that “the sacrifices and disadvantages that German agriculture

66 This could also be seen in CDU meetings of the agriculture committee in Schleswig-Holstein. One delegate complained how negatively television portrayed agriculture; Niederschrift über die Sitzung des Landesfachausschusses “Agrarpolitik” des CDU-Landesverbandes Schleswig-Holstein am 20.November 1969,” ACDP 03-006 088/2.

67 Patel, Europäisierung, 438; “noch schrecklicher als das derzeitige Farmertum Nordamerikas.”
has endured through harmonization of prices but not costs are unacceptable.” Farmers were not the only ones using such language. Bundestag President Eugen Gerstenmeier was recorded during the closing remarks of a meeting between CDU and DBV stating: “the sacrifices that farmers have shouldered for the European Union must be also carried by the rest of society.”

Twenty years earlier in the late 1940s, farmers had been instrumental in feeding the populace, providing the human energy necessary to power the “economic miracle,” according to the rhetoric. Now it was payback time.

Perhaps the most interesting topic was “farmer against farmer.” Some regretted that the farm lobby arrogated the decision to disrupt the speech. Farmers had lost an opportunity to hear Mansholt for themselves and raise questions that he would have been hard-pressed to avoid. In particular, the younger farmers were opposed to a boycott. Some carried signs that said, “Discuss instead of boycott! Only cows moo!” (Diskutieren statt boykottieren! Nur Ochsen brüllen “buh!”). One young farmer thought the Farmers’ Association had organized a small, radical group to sabotage the meeting. The Association had gravely abused (stark mißbraucht) its position of authority. If this is true, it was clever on the part of the lobby because Mansholt was at pains to speak “directly” to farmers rather than their representatives. Young farmers believed that open discussion was democratic. A group of notables (Honoratioren) deciding to boycott a speech without farmers’ consent was not.

Another farmer whose age is uncertain said those who carried signs or supported Mansholt were “bootlickers” (Steigbügelhalter), implying that young farmers had “stabbed their

---


70 It is to the editorial board’s credit that they did publish this letter.
colleagues in the back” (*in den Rücken fallen*). Farmers might disagree about the appropriate form of protest but that would be best done behind “closed doors.” As it was, farmers lacked solidarity. The generational tension was palpable between those in favor of compromise and rapid European integration and those who stood for stonewalling tactics as well as the type of *Honoratiorenpolitik* where select men made decisions for the rest of the profession.

In its much-revised form, the plan was watered down. Terms such as “production units” were omitted. In March 1972, the Commission passed a “mini” Mansholt Plan with three guidelines: investment for modernization, measures to ease emigration from agriculture, and increased funding for consultation and continuing education services. In the end, far more important than the actual provisions of the plan was the perception of the farm lobby’s behavior during the showdown with Mansholt. It was hardly incumbent upon Schleswig-Holstein’s farmers to ensure Mansholt’s defeat. As Kiran Klaus Patel has found, agricultural ministers cooperating on the European level by this time looked askance at costs of subsidies and the problems of overproduction.71 This largely homogenous group of men strongly tied to the primary sector were unwilling to confront producers. Major newspapers such as the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* followed these developments with irritation and then resignation. Mansholt had raised “provocative truths” that no one was willing to face.72

5.5 Protest in the early 1970s

Despite the emergence of the diluted form of Mansholt’s plan in the early 1970s, protests offered no signs of slowing. Between the fall of 1970 and spring of 1972, waves of farm protest

---


72 “Mansholts provokante Wahrheiten,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (23 October 1967). The article’s author, Hans Herbert Götz, was an informed journalist who had followed agrarian issues for some time.
passed over West Germany. The DBV registered an alarming centrifugal tendency in the farm
lobby regarding the Schleswig-Holstein Association. The important question is how serious was
the threat of radicalization. On November 2, 1970, a cavalcade of 200 buses and cars bore
farmers from Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony to the center of Hamburg to mount a silent
march through the city. More than 10,000 people participated. That December, 10,000 farmers
blocked the border to Denmark, and a similar protest occurred in Oldenburg in March. In
Schleswig, farmers blocked roads with their tractors for several hours and staged sit-ins.73
Alarming signs appeared that the farm lobby was losing control over demonstrations, such as
when Farmers’ Association Chairman Karl Eigen vainly ordered farmers to clear the railroad
tracks to Puttgarden on the island of Fehmarn.74 Farmers held up signs with slogans such as
“Brüssel läßt uns in Stich, darum ist Puttgarden dicht.” That is, Brussels had left farmers in the
lurch, leading them to throng the streets. The familiar motivations included outrage at economic
injustice wrought on farmers by Bonn and Brussels, the mortal threat to small farms, and the low
prices for beef and milk. No less than 40,000 people took to the streets in Bonn on March 27,
1971, the largest single demonstration in the history of the Federal Republic between 1949 and
NATO protests in the early 1980s.75 Although the numbers were unusually large, this protest was
entirely consistent with the patron-client relationship between the government and the farm
lobby since the Weimar Republic. The lobby played the role of the remonstrant. The single
consistent tone through decades of front-page news on the Bauernblatt is one of pleading,
complaint, objection, threats, and grievance.

74 “Mistförke und Knüppel,” 8 (February 2, 1971).
75 Patel, Europäisierung, 477.
Hans-Jürgen Klinker, Struve’s successor as head of the Schleswig-Holstein Association, demanded a price increase of 15 percent for pork, poultry, eggs, and fruit at the November 1970 rally. Furthermore, he claimed the “Green Dollar” should be eliminated until a unified currency was created. Protesters carried signs that said the Brandt government had cheated them. Erich Thiesen relates an interesting anecdote that exposes but does not resolve the question whether protest was “from below” or directed by the lobby. According to Thiesen’s story, a farmer was asked why he was demonstrating. “I’m protesting the Green Dollar,” he confidently answered. When questioned about this event, he replied, “Yeah, well I’m not so sure. Why don’t you ask the guy from the Bauernblatt?” Thiesen himself was then a reporter for the Bauernblatt and recalled generally sympathetic onlookers. The national press was different. Erich Geiersberger of Bayerischen Rundfunk took the hardest line. In an interview with the public radio station (ARD), he said the fault lay with men such as Struve and Klinker, who had been pulling the strings at the Farmers’ Association headquarters in Rendsburg for twenty years. It had become the “green Kremlin.” Perhaps he was still angry about the fiasco in Kiel.

Tensions between the federal government and farm lobby increased palpably at this time. With the SPD and FDP in the government as of 1971 farmers received less sympathy. Dark accusations swirled that the lobby was a tool of the CDU. The same political fault lines ran through Land politics, particularly in light of the April 25, 1971 election. SPD delegate Karl Becker praised the policies of fellow Social Democrat and Federal Economics Minister Karl Schiller. Becker declared, “The best agrarian policy is creating jobs in non-farming sectors,”

78 Thiesen, Es begann, 241.
79 Thiesen, Es began, 241.
which would facilitate flight from the land and cushion the impact of consolidating small farms into larger, more economically viable units.80

There is credence to Patel’s argument that agrarian protest in the early 1970s was the result of unusually radical Land organizations, such as those in Schleswig-Holstein, pushing the national lobby too far.81 In the spring of 1971, 700 youth farmers (Jungbauern) staged a tax strike in Dithmarschen on the west coast, the hotbed of agrarian radicalism in Schleswig-Holstein since the late 1920s. Speaking on behalf of the assembled farmers, Uwe Thiessen justified the refusal to pay the land tax (Grundsteuer A) because although West Germany was fully integrated in the EU, the tax systems were still incompatible.82 Deeming the assistance rendered by Brussels and Bonn to be “completely inadequate,” the farmers took their fate into their own hands. The DBV distanced itself from this act of provocation.83 Competitive “distortions” needed to be addressed. By calling for a 15 percent price increase, Klinker exceeded the DBV’s demand for a 10 percent increase. He justified his figure by citing the Federal Statistics Bureau’s figure that costs had increased 14.2 percent since December 1969.

Agrarian unrest in the early 1970s in Schleswig-Holstein culminated with the Kiel “Farmers’ Day” on July 9 and 10, 1971 when it came to an open rift between Federal Agriculture Minister Josef Ertl and the Schleswig-Holstein Farmers’ Association. The uproar of December 1969 was repeated in Kiel in July 1971. Approximately fifty Jungbauern staged a sit-in by taking

---

80 Cited by Thiesen, Es begann, 243.
81 Patel, Europäisierung, 480-81.
83 BA/K B 136/8637, BAK, Gruppe IV/1 an Brandt (19.4.1971); Thiesen, Es begann, 245.
leaders’ seats on the podium. They declared that they wished to shock the public, government, and farm lobby alike. All the years that farm interests had cultivated “friendships” and political alliances had been for naught, they said. President Heereman noted that disrupting this meeting put farmers in a bad light, particularly in view of the nationwide protests then dominating headlines. He convinced them to surrender their seats. Worse was to come. When Federal Minister Ertl took the podium, he was booed into silence when he mentioned the improvements in the milk price. Heereman begged him to stay, but Ertl left in a huff. Although he was not a member of the Christian Democrats, the “farmers’ party,” Ertl had initially given the impression that had done much on their behalf. His sense of disappointment with farmers in Schleswig-Holstein must have been acute.

Rifts appeared in the farm lobby leadership when Klinker vowed more of such actions in the future. The Schleswig-Holstein Association defended its actions, stating that it had done everything in its power to ensure that the convention proceeded smoothly. In his greeting, Klinker admonished listeners to be hospitable (Gastrecht). It was only natural that Ertl’s inflammatory words led to a spontaneous uproar. The editors of the Bauernblatt hinted that he had staged his exit. Lobbyists used similar tactics during the Mansholt episode, blaming the speaker. The most important justification for the latest wave of protests was the claim that even well run, rationally managed farms stood on the brink of ruin. True to form, the Schleswig-Holstein Association used the venue to trot out a laundry list of demands in its pompous and long-winded “Kiel Declaration” (Die Kieler Erklärung). The list ranged from abolishing the land


85 According to one of the members of the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein, Niederschrift über die Sitzung des Landesfachausschusses “Agrarpolitik” des CDU-Landesverbandes Schleswig-Holstein am 20.November 1969,” ACDP 03-006 088/2.

tax (Grundsteuer A), increasing price supports, and a host of other measures that someone such as Ertl was in no position to implement. The lobby seemed ready to exploit any situation it could to make its wishes heard.

Heereman strongly disapproved the farmers’ boorish behavior toward Ertl. The cacophony in Kiel damaged agriculture’s public image. Not allowing the minister to speak was undemocratic. Ertl was so upset that during the press conference following the scandal he accused the Schleswig-Holstein Association of violating political neutrality. The farmers’ feelings were mutual. Indeed, the CDU scored well in the Landtag election of 1971 in reaction to the SPD/FDP coalition’s farm policies. Chancellor Brandt, who had assiduously maintained contacts with the farm lobby during the first part of his administration, allowed a “cooling off period” after the debacle. An internal memorandum from the chancellor’s office attests to this “alienation” (Entfremdung). Although he had promised in April 1971 to meet with farmers in Rendsburg, in view of the situation, it seemed advisable to postpone if not cancel the meeting.

A rift opened between Klinker and Heereman after the Kiel episode when the former promised that more such actions were to come. Heereman said “Klinker may say that as head of the association in Schleswig-Holstein, but not as vice-president of the DBV. For that he would have to sit on the presidium.” Eventually, Klinker caved in to pressure from Heereman and the national farmers’ association. Relations to the government were restored.

---

87 Patel, Europäisierung, 482.


89 Patel, Europäisierung, 482.
5.6 Changing of the Guard

The radical behavior of the Schleswig-Holstein Association within the farm lobby was partly due to changing leadership. Major changes in agrarian politics occurred during the late 1960s in leadership at the European, federal, and Land levels. Hermann Höcherl from the CSU was succeeded by Josef Ertl of the FDP as federal agriculture minister. The national and Schleswig-Holstein farm lobby also changed. Whereas the national lobby moved toward conciliation, in Schleswig-Holstein leadership seemed to prefer a more radical course.

With changing farm leadership came fundamental shifts in attitude toward structural change. When outsiders such as Mansholt forcibly proposed this, most West German farmers rejected it. However, when Constantin Freiherr Heereman von Zuydtwyck, former president of the Westphalian-Lippe Farmers’ Association, was finally elected as national chairman on December 19, 1969 to replace Rehwinkel, a perceptible shift occurred. Rehwinkel was bitter about politicians’ “broken promises” and he had become disillusioned with protests. It was too expensive to provide for “fighting measures” (Kampfmaßnahmen), such as tractor parades, through cities. The extensive time required to find Rehwinkel’s replacement after he had stepped down in January 1968 reflected the lobby’s effort to re-orient itself. Internal criticism of the price-centric policy had increased. Heereman was more than thirty years Rehwinkel’s junior. In 1971, he finally broke the taboo against recognizing the inevitability of structural change, stating, “in the interests of modern farm lobbying we must acknowledge structural change as a fact of

---

90 Patel, Europäisierung, 416.

91 Patel, Europäisierung, 417.
life."\(^{92}\) A cool technocrat willing to take agriculture in a new direction, Heereman modestly referred to his position as farm union president as “my job” (Job). Agriculture was just “business,”—a profession, not a “calling” imbued with higher meaning. He declared “unfurling black flags no longer the most modern form of demonstration,”\(^{93}\) referring to the black flags of protest that had been used since the Weimar Republic. Rehwinkel had donned traditional peasant garb during public meetings, often speaking in Low German. Heereman learned French to negotiate more effectively in Brussels. Old habits died hard, however. One of Heereman’s deputies, Vice President F. von Feury, declared in 1969 that the “peasantry” (Bauerntum) possessed intrinsic value beyond any economic, technological or rational consideration. Betraying these values would cause “irreparable damage” (irreparable Schäden).\(^{94}\) Thus, the line between continuity and rupture in farm leadership is fine, but by the early 1970s, a critical tipping point for the political “demythification” of agriculture had been reached.

In February 1969, Hans-Jürgen Klinker replaced Detlef Struve as president of the Schleswig-Holstein Farmers’ Association. Struve, who was the Nestor of Schleswig-Holstein’s agro-politics by the late 1960s, had to endure the indignity of a vote of no confidence by the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein. It seemed that the older generation faced only one choice between “grow or make way.” Struve’s junior by eighteen years, Klinker was a long-time member of the Landtag and European Parliament, who also ran his own large farm.\(^{95}\) Compared to Struve and Heereman, Klinker opted for a more confrontational approach to agrarian politics, as


\(^{93}\) „Wir sind in der EWG ein vorbelasteter Partner,” Der Spiegel (March 30, 1970).


\(^{95}\) Thiesen, Es begann, 205-07.
demonstrated in the previous section regarding price demands. He cultivated a tough-guy image. After leaving a protest demonstration for his post in the European parliament, his friends advised him to “bring your manure pitchfork and a club!” As with Rehwinkel in the 1950s, it was tough talk. At the same time, Klinker parroted the usual line about the Farmers’ Association not opposing structural change so long as it proceeded “organically” and avoided “hardship.”

We should not overestimate the rift when leadership changed, both in Schleswig-Holstein (from Struve to Klinker) or in the DBV (from Rehwinkel to Heereman). Marches, rallies, and demonstrations are repeatedly described as “orderly” and “disciplined,” reflecting the great influence of Rehwinkel’s personality. He used strong language and a gruff demeanor but never overstepped the bounds of legality.

The shift in leadership roughly paralleled German political developments and European agrarian shifts. During the Adenauer and Erhard eras, farmers found sympathy from the government. Under the Grand Coalition, the DBV would have to change its tactics. Similarly, the second half of the 1960s witnessed a change in negotiations for agricultural integration. “Generally, the atmosphere in Brussels got tougher: the cooperative, compromising and convivial spirit of earlier years was gone.” The reformist climate and euphoria for planning in the 1960s, budget cuts to agriculture, the SPD in the government, and ongoing European integration whittled down the agrarian myth into just that. Indeed, by the late 1960s little remained of the mystique previously attached to the Bauernhof, the family farm. In 1971, a DBV leader declared:

97 Bauernblatt (June 2, 1969), 2336.
98 See Kluge, 40 Jahre, vol. 2, 50.
99 Patel, “Europeanization à contre-cœur,” 150.
The younger generation of small farmers has a different attitude to farming from that of their parents and grandparents. For them the farmhouse is not a value in itself, but a base for professional activity. His expectations regarding future income primarily determine whether he will take up a farming career.\footnote{Cited by Cecil, \textit{German Agriculture}, 69.}

This statement casts the main effect of structural change in sharp relief, the transformation of peasant (\textit{Bauer}) to agricultural businessman (\textit{Landwirt}). The holy trinity of agriculture had traditionally been a balance among land, capital, and labor. Over time, the land and any sense of responsibility to keep it within the family, ebbed. Investment and cutting labor costs were everything. Decades of the farm lobby’s fixation on “just” prices for farm goods and “equitable incomes” had done more than anything else to hollow out the agrarian myth of the intangible value of farming for society. The “long goodbye to agriculture”\footnote{Daniela Münkel, \textit{Der lange Abschied vom Agrarland: Agrarpolitik, Landwirtschaft und ländliche Gesellschaft zwischen Weimar und Bonn} (Göttingen, 2000).} in West Germany was nearly complete.

\textbf{5.7 Conclusion}

Except for the immediate postwar period, the years 1968-1971 were the most important for structural change and the political integration of agriculture in society in West Germany. The key characteristics of structural change were the transition from labor- to capital-intensive agriculture and the growing size and declining number of individual farms.\footnote{Kluge, \textit{40 Jahre} vol. II, 52.} Regarding capital-intensive agriculture, agro-politicians and experts shared concern about levels of debt, whereas individual farmers’ debt could indicate investment for modernization.\footnote{For example, at a meeting of the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein in February 1969, delegates were concerned that the nation level of indebtedness increased by 11 percent the previous year; \textit{Entschließung der Landesfachausschuss für Agrarpolitik im Landesverband der CDU Schleswig-Holstein} (20.Februar 1969), ACDP 03-006 088/2.} In the late 1960s, approximately 1.4 million farms operated in West Germany, but only half a million of these met federal guidelines of securing adequate income for a family. As long as the market could absorb
farmers leaving their livelihood, this situation was not such a problem. However, by 1968 and 1969, the economy could no longer cushion the blow of structural change. In addition, the timetable for European integration would bear no postponement. The protest erupted due to a conjuncture of interlocking factors: general economic slowdown, budget cuts, provocative “shock therapy” proposed by leading EU politicians, and looming deadlines for agricultural integration. Although the level of protest assumed alarming proportions in the eyes of contemporaries, in hindsight, it helped break the impasse in stubborn issues in the agrarian agenda, such as price versus structural policies. With new leadership came recognition that these issues were not strictly binary.

In 1968, the Commission raised doubts about the merits of modeling European agriculture on the family farm; optimal farm size demanded greater attention. This view was most forcibly expressed in the Mansholt Plan, the significance of which is simple. Mansholt believed the only way to reduce the income gap was to reduce the workforce in agriculture. The farm lobby had for years treated the “flight from the land,” structural change, and income disparities as separate issues, but Mansholt’s startling idea was to consider them linked. Although extremely unpopular, his ideas did move at least some farm politicians in Schleswig-Holstein to change their views. One delegate declared that farmers needed to be told that, in the future, there would be “limited opportunities” (geringe Möglichkeiten) to raise prices. The CDU was responsible for leading farmers toward other professions (Umschulungsmaßnahmen), he added. Improving income could only be achieved by reducing the number of people in agriculture, the delegate concluded.


105 Ibid, “Ein Ausgleich könnte nur durch die Abnahme der landwirtschaftlichen Bevölkerung erzielt warden.”
In addition, the Plan directly attacked the family farm, denying that it should be the fundamental unit of West German agriculture. Instead, farms were referred to as “agricultural enterprises,” or, even worse, “production units.”106 The German Agriculture Law from 1955 obligated the government to achieve income parity between farming and comparable occupations using the family farm as the basic unit of agriculture. By the late 1960s, Mansholt and others thought this legislation was a failure and outdated. An interview Detlef Struve granted on his seventieth birthday reinforces how difficult it was for West German agrarians to accept substantial revision if not abrogation of the 1955 law.107 Struve stressed the difficulty he encountered convincing even political friends of the necessity of “parity.” He counted the passage of the “Magna Carta” of West German agrarian politics one of its greatest achievements.

Although agrarian protest never seriously threatened to derail German or European politics, it would be wrong to dismiss it as a storm in a teacup. It is too facile to say that the EU could not collapse merely due to the price of milk or butter. The agricultural budget actually soared in the late 1960s. In May 1967, the Chancellor’s Office estimated that the Guidance and Guarantee Fund cost for milk subsidies in 1968-69 would amount to 8.3 billion DM. In October 1968, the Council of Ministers tried to reduce the size of the “butter mountain.” Hundreds of thousands of tons of surplus butter existed. Their idea was to sell off stores to particular consumer groups and the processing industry.108 Selling surplus to special groups was one of the remedies brought up in protests in Schleswig-Holstein. Realizing agricultural integration was hard work.

108 Kluge 40 Jahre vol.2, 58.
The events in Kiel in December 1969 and July 1971 thrust Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture into the limelight. On balance, farmers demonstrated that they felt themselves to be a part of West German society. The protest culture straddled tradition and modernity. Farmers in Schleswig-Holstein dressed “respectably” whereas their younger colleagues drove tractors through the streets—an ironic statement on modernization and structural change—and staged sit-ins. Protesters were anxious to distinguish themselves from the student movements and the dark past of the Rural People’s Movement of the 1920s by insisting their protests were fully compliant with democracy. Although the farm lobby used the same language from the 1920s, such as “fighting methods” (Kampfmaßnahmen), these phrases contained new meanings. “Fighting methods” had once meant spontaneous and often violent demonstrations against the state, tax boycotts, bomb attacks against government buildings, and anti-Semitism, but because by the late 1960s, farm advocates were too media-savvy to alienate city-dwellers or provoke civil authorities, protest was carefully orchestrated and peaceful. Although it sometime attacked Bonn, the farm lobby helped shift the target to Brussels by fixating on the Green Dollar and Mansholt. Farmers were good Germans if not yet good Europeans. The lobby sought to project an image of responsible sobriety for its protest culture.

Farmers no longer questioned the legitimacy of the state or political parties, as had happened two generations before. Farm leaders such as Rehwinkel dexterously courted one party after another, but never burned their bridges. Constant anguish at “betrayal” by the government and reminders of the “sacrifices” agriculture had made for the state and the European Union might have been irritating, but such attestations did demonstrate agriculture’s integration in both West Germany and the EU. Farm lobbyists inserted agriculture into the foundational myth of the Federal Republic by insisting that its unrequited sacrifice had fueled the “economic miracle.”
Finally, the changing leadership helped re-center major paradigms in agricultural policy, such as the price versus structural debate.

The early- to mid-1970s is a fitting place to end this narrative because the basic terms in which agricultural structural change were framed began to shift. No longer did the “family farm” occupy pride of place in policy debates; rather, “land stewardship,” ecological concerns, and agro-tourism assumed increasing importance. In some ways, professed ecological concern was a clever strategy to re-introduce the family farm as the best alternative. Industrial agriculture was at fault for pollution and inhumane treatment of animals. The agro-political network reinvented its image to legitimate its existence and function. Protests ebbed in 1972. A good harvest, the Commission’s acquiescence to higher prices in certain commodities, and the conscious “anti-1968” self-stylization of farm lobbies meant that the government could breathe a sigh of relief.109 Protest was channeled into acceptable parameters, restoring a modicum of trust between agriculture and government.

Conclusion

This dissertation aimed to shed light on important areas of West German political, economic, and social history by focusing on a primarily rural, agricultural Land. Among the most important changes in the rural society in Schleswig-Holstein were political democratization and agricultural structural change in economics. The economic changes affecting agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein were rapid and profound, whereas the development of a democratic political culture was slower. The “de-agrarianization” of rural society was the slowest of all, measured in terms of mental changes and adaptations to rapid economic change. The idea of the family farm was remarkably durable, although its economic practicality waned. Key institutions in reconstituting civil society, such as farm lobbies, made rapid structural changes in 1945 to organize themselves on a democratic basis, but members were slower to accept the “rules” and “attitudes” of democracy, such as peaceful protest and constructive problem solving. The lobby was extremely reluctant to accept the reality of structural change and persisted in price-centric policies for decades, arguably complicating business for their clients.

I have treated structural change and democratization as long-term processes. Explaining structural change required uncovering the economic aspects that helped or hindered the process by which agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein transformed from a predominance of traditional family farms into modernized, consolidated, and specialized farms integrated into the new economy. In terms of democratization, I was interested in factors that facilitated or obstructed
farmers from becoming democrats. I focused on important markers of political culture, such as the ties between lobby groups and political parties, protest rhetoric and behavior, attitudes toward political adversaries, and how individuals acted within institutional frameworks.

In 1945, Schleswig-Holstein had a traditional social order in the countryside, a rather backward agriculture—even allowing for all the disruption of the war, and a staunchly conservative political orientation. Nevertheless, by the early 1970s, most farmers in that Land had affirmed democracy and the Federal Republic, adjusted to the economics of structural change, and accepted the great social changes in village and farm life that had occurred over the previous decades. Declaring that agriculture was a major part of the “success story” of the Federal Republic is overly simplistic. However, it is safe to say that farmers facilitated rather than undermined the stability of the Federal Republic, rather than contributing to the downfall of the democratic state as they did in the Weimar Republic.

The path to democratization and agricultural modernization was neither straight nor easy. The control economy of the Third Reich and the sturdy political support it enjoyed from farmers until the bitter end boded ill for structural change and democratization after 1945. The demographic upheaval added tremendous social burden to these economic and political aspects. Overcoming the crisis in agriculture during 1945-1948 was an existential struggle. Production and administration were reconstructed and civil society revived with great difficulty. Structural change did occur but under conditions of a control economy, this time under British direction. Reverting to subsistence agriculture was a step backward, making later modernization more difficult. Farmers did relatively well in the black market, achieving a modicum of social and material well being that set an early precedent. In a scarcity economy based on commodities, they succeeded, which made adjusting to the price scissors after the currency reform more
difficult to bear.\textsuperscript{1} A creeping sense of privilege and entitlement set in. Farmers and their representatives were reluctant to let go of this lesson. The abortive land reform and short-circuiting of the denazification of agriculture postponed real political change. British attempts at land reform and “Democratization and Decentralization” of local government fell short of most expectations. The British wished to eliminate the Führer principle and shake up the local elites, but they accomplished little, prompting Field Marshal Montgomery to speak of an “artificial revolution.”\textsuperscript{2} The worst offenders and the most notorious National Socialists were removed, but local politics proceeded on a “business as usual” basis afterward. British actions privileged stability and continuity, not rupture and confrontation, of the National Socialist past. As Ulrich Mathée has stressed, local farm leadership, practices and attitudes in politics were scarcely affected by historical caesurae such as 1918, 1933, and 1945.\textsuperscript{3}

Nonetheless, some key figures with unblemished democratic credentials such as Detlef Struve were put in place, mitigating against a purely negative appraisal of a static political culture. In the early years of the Federal Republic, another opportunity for structural change was lost, as agriculture was quickly cushioned within the Social Market Economy. Weimar-era protectionism was resurrected. Instead of structural-political mechanisms designed to make West German agriculture more competitive, the lobby and government teamed up to pass market regulation laws. These stabilized prices and protected the market. An entitlement culture took hold of agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein and never relented, making farmers feel sufficiently strong to revert to an outbreak of chauvinist activism in 1951 reminiscent of earlier periods. The

\textsuperscript{1} Corni, “Markt, Politik und Staat,” 70-71.


\textsuperscript{3} Mathée, \textit{Elitenbildung}, 135.
Agriculture Law from 1955 put agriculture on a pedestal, where the farm interests lobbied against the hard edge of economics—the pressure to modernize, specialize, and expand operations—using the “soft” and woolly idea of the “family farm.”

By the mid-1960s, the politics of “business as usual” in agriculture—gradual economic change cushioned with massive federal and state aid—could no longer be sustained. World competition and European integration meant neither structural change nor agrarian politics were under West Germany’s complete control any more. People left farming in droves, and those remaining had to increase the size of their holdings and accept new methods. Decisions could no longer be made by well-to-do farmers behind closed doors. Structural change, particularly in the dairy industry, was relentless. For all the tremendous economic and social consequences of this change, it is remarkable how little it registered in farmers’ politics. The pressures farmers faced in these years were as great, if not greater, than those of the previous generation. The farmer in 1928, for the most part, felt trapped; forty years later, he could leave farming with government aid (i.e., subsidies and even re-education) to smoothen out the process and, in many cases, even experience upward mobility.

For those who stayed in farming, the late 1960s revealed the limits of political radicalism. Farmers quickly realized that fringe parties such as the NPD could offer no realistic prospect of handling structural change on farmers’ terms. No discernible benefit emerged from backing a political party that aimed to destroy the “system” as the NSDAP promised earlier. Farmers were too enmeshed in a web of consumers, producers, and industrialists on one hand and huge, incomprehensible bureaucracies such as the European Union on the other. The farm lobby leadership changed from traditionalists to technocrats. The term structural change, hitherto taboo, became the norm. Figures such as Sicco Mansholt served as a lightning rod for farmers’ protests.
against modernization. However, he only really highlighted the obvious: traditional farming was extinct. His plan might well have been the last desperate attempt to break the protectionist agrarian policy pursued by national agriculture ministers. Farmers in Schleswig-Holstein took to the streets in 1968, and the fact that they were not alone forced them to consider pragmatically how much they stood with the “system.” Unlike their aim in the late 1920s and the aim of many young people in 1968, the farmers’ protest was not designed to bring down the system but somehow ease the discomfort of change. In staging huge demonstrations, farmers were highly politicized but not in a way which threatened the Bonn Republic.

Concluding this study of Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture affords me the opportunity to roam more widely in discussing the issues of structural change and democratization. I am interested in both unique developments in Schleswig-Holstein and how that region fit into the larger story of agricultural modernization, democracy, and European integration. What can we say about the process of structural change during economic recessions (e.g., the 1920s) and booms (i.e., the 1950s “economic miracle”)? In terms of democratization, how does farm protest, for example, compare to the student movement of the 1960s and earlier agrarian unrest? Finally, did European integration render Land agrarian politics irrelevant?

That Schleswig-Holstein and West Germany as a whole experienced agricultural modernization was nothing unique to industrial countries. Structural change is a feature common to all modernizing economies. Particularly after World War II, the shrinking of the primary sector and growth of secondary and tertiary sectors were recurrent patterns. Among western European countries, however, the Federal Republic stood out in its “long farewell” to agriculture,

---

4 As argued by Ehrenreich, Subventionierung, 156.

as the compilation edited by Daniela Münkel demonstrated. Although my study is not comparative, it is clear that agriculture played a considerable role in Land and federal politics in a way scarcely conceivable in Great Britain, for example.

Those quick to find fault with the rather lame attempt to settle refugees in farm plots in Schleswig-Holstein or West Germany as a whole might consider the situation in Italy at about the same time. The distribution of farmland there was much more lopsided (e.g., the latifundia in the southern part of the country), and as much as 42 percent of the population worked in agriculture in 1950, where as only 25 percent of West Germany’s population did. Italy’s land reform was but a “drop in an ocean of misery” for hundreds of thousands of eager settlers.

An adequate account of structural change must go beyond cataloguing the changes in how farmers went about their way of life. How did their thought patterns and values change? In this regard, Schleswig-Holstein farmers responded similar to the rest of the country. According to Paul Erker, “All told, through the mechanization starting in the 1950s, farmers’ occupational norms (Berufsnormen) changed.” Farming as a way of life was gradually shorn of its mystical, ideological, and social connotations. If farmers wanted to survive, they would have to maintain detailed bookkeeping, turn to consulting firms for advice on practices and financing, and keep up with international trade developments and regulations by reading the Bauernblatt. Many were undoubtedly unable to meet the challenges of structural change and so found new work and new

---

6 Münkel, Der lange Abschied.

7 For just such a comparison, consider Center for European Agricultural Studies (ed.), The Development of Agriculture in Germany and the UK (Ashford, 1979-1984), vols.1-5.


identities in the towns and cities. What happened to these ex-farmers would be a subject for further study.

In the historiography on agricultural modernization in West Germany, scholars debate whether farmers were “losers” in this process. For Josef Mooser, farmers clearly were losers, in that agrarian policy shifted from favoring producers to consumers. In Paul Erker, studying Bavaria, reached a different conclusion, arguing that farmers were in fact instrumental in the modernization process. The more enterprising farmers took advantage of the situation to reconfigure their farms to part-time endeavors, finding more lucrative work in the city. The farm served as an extra source of income and fallback in economic recessions. Those farmers who were POWs in the United States or Canada were exposed to modern agriculture and brought these ideas home with them.

In the case of Schleswig-Holstein, farmers may have increasingly become the “objects” of policy and their freedom to decide how to go about their livelihood became restricted. However, at least they did not resort to extreme politics as their predecessors did forty years earlier. On the whole, farmers and the lobby were more realistic about what the government could do for them during the adjustment process. Important figures such Detlef Struve helped convince farmers that antagonizing consumers or the Social Democrats would lead nowhere.

Turning to structural change, Schleswig-Holstein’s experience in agriculture was not unique in the sense that most modernizing economies undergo a process whereby the primary sector shrinks in size and relative economic importance. Borrowing Wolfgang Zapf’s definition of modernization makes sense: a “society’s efforts to meet its own challenges through innovation

---


This study exposed many examples of such innovation and reform: the enlargement of land holdings, specialization, new veterinary care for livestock farming, the forming of conglomerates for the dairy industry, and so on. At the same time, we should not lose sight of the special features of agricultural structural change. Declining numbers of wage-workers coupled with increasing mechanization made for an odd mixture of old and new. Farms became “traditional” family homesteads where farmers, perhaps used to having paid workers to do field work, now had to drive the tractor themselves. Schleswig-Holstein stood out because its average farm size was consistently larger than the national average. It would be going too far to say that its agriculture was the “most” modern or based on industrial-scale models, but the prevalence of large farms resulted in the lobby consistently backing full-time, well-to-do farmers. With a large percentage of farmers working full-time on large holdings, rather than smaller plots prevalent in areas like Baden and Württemberg, Schleswig-Holstein had to pay considerable attention to market fluctuations and developments in the European Union. That farms became larger, on average, was a common but by no means universal characteristic of structural change. For example, the number of small and medium-sized farms in Italy increased enormously after World War II.  

Although measuring income disparities and correlating this figure to “contentment” are notoriously difficult, Gesine Gerhard and Dieter Ehrenreich demonstrated how massive subsidies delayed structural change so that most farmers did not feel alienated by the political establishment. Ehrenreich conjectured that, had the government not subsidized agriculture so

---


13 Corni, “Markt,” 75.

14 Gerhard, Peasants into Farmers, Ehrenreich, Subventionierung.
heavily, farmers would have switched from full- to part-time farming or left it altogether much more abruptly in the early 1950s, before an extensive social safety-net was in place, which would have resulted in severe social dislocation.\textsuperscript{15}

Despite the nagging problem of the income gap between farmers and other occupations, farmers were gradually integrated in the social-political fabric of the Federal Republic, being included in the health care, retirement, and accident-insurance systems. As the 1956 Green Plan mentioned, the problem of lagging farm incomes was a common one in both industrialized and developing countries.\textsuperscript{16}

Farmers had many ways to react to change: outright refusal, piecemeal efforts, leaving agriculture, turning to agriculture firms and local government for education, seeking financial aid to mechanize operations, and so on. The first to leave farming were non-family members. That farming became a “one-man operation” (\textit{Einmannbetrieb}) ignores the fact that women bore the brunt of intensification of agriculture whereas wage-laborers were let go. Regional studies reveal a pattern that intensification occurred before mechanization, which translated into a disproportionately increased workload for women. For example, Helene Albers demonstrated the usefulness of a gendered approach to these topics by highlighting the staggered introduction of new technology. In Westphalia-Lippe, tractors made the greatest impact and were normally driven by men at first. Milking machines were introduced later, and their installation and initial operation were performed by men, despite the fact that milking was traditionally considered women’s work.\textsuperscript{17} Developments in Schleswig-Holstein basically confirmed Albers’ findings in

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{15} Ehrenreich, \textit{Subventionierung}, 157.
\textsuperscript{16} Grüner Plan 1956, 6, 11-12.
\end{flushright}
Westphalia-Lippe. Oral testimony indicates that farm machines, tools, and implements were introduced first, followed by kitchen and household gadgets. No one-size-fits-all solution existed, and the memoirs, recorded interviews, and other sources I reviewed do not sustain a generalization that younger or better-educated farmers were more adaptable than their older colleagues. Dieter Ehrenreich hit near the mark in summarizing structural change this way: larger operations, by mechanizing early on, could free themselves of wage-laborers, but, in contrast to the 1920s and 1930s, the farmers themselves had to drive the tractors.18 The clear social hierarchies that had previously existed in agriculture faded over time. Analyzing the Wasbek district near Hamburg, Ehrenreich found that the traditional farm village ceased to exist. Instead, rural villages became where most people commuted to city jobs, whereas farms had transformed into businesses centered on supplying the city. This pattern was repeated in countless areas throughout Schleswig-Holstein. Farmers and their representatives probably toned down complaints about the hardships of structural change because of the experience of their colleagues across the border in East Germany.19 Because farm lobbyists exploited the difference between East and West Germany to the hilt, excessive complaining would have been self-defeating.

Turning to the democracy question, we need to revisit Timothy Alan Tilton’s declaration: “The Weimar farmer was trapped on his marginal farm; the present day farmer is not. The importance of this fact cannot be overestimated.”20 The economic boom of Bonn empowered farmers either to find better jobs or, for those who stayed in agriculture, to enjoy a higher standard of living than in any other period. The recession of the late 1920s caused pauperization and radicalization. Writing in the early 1970s, when political scientists, sociologists, and

18 Ehrenreich, Subventionierung, 173.
19 Gerhard, Peasants into Farmers, 220.
20 Tilton, Nazism, 141.
historians researched the brief rise of the NPD in rural areas in connection with the ascendancy of the NDSAP in the same areas forty years before, Tilton concluded that “Societies are susceptible to rural-based movements of the extreme right only at certain periods in their historical development.”\(^{21}\) Rudolf Heberle argued in his classic study of Schleswig-Holstein from the 1930s that extreme parties such as the National Socialists scored better in farm areas where monoculture prevailed, i.e., where farms were more vulnerable to economic downturns.\(^{22}\) Heinz Sahner, investigating the same areas for the 1960s, modified Heberle’s findings by establishing that it was not the owners of highly specialized farms (monoculture) \textit{per se} who tended to vote for the extreme party (NPD) but those suffering from sales (\textit{Absatze}krise) problems, which happened to be grain farms.\(^{23}\) Heberle demonstrated that the CDU had largely absorbed farmers. Other studies confirmed that farmers increasingly gravitated toward the CDU during the 1960s; in the early years, the FDP could still claim a foothold in agricultural areas.\(^{24}\) Of all social groups, farmers tended to vote in extremely homogenous surroundings (family, the village, etc.), which lessened the likelihood of radical changes in voting patterns.\(^{25}\)

I agree with Tilton that a multitude of factors convinced many farmers in Schleswig-Holstein to support the NDSAP, of which economic distress was one. In both the Weimar and Bonn eras, farmers were “pampered” and expected government aid. High tariff barriers, stiff world competition, and other conditions were similar in both eras. However, the economic factor was one among many.

\(^{21}\) Ibid, 142.

\(^{22}\) Heberle, \textit{Landbevölkerung}, 103.

\(^{23}\) Sahner, \textit{Politische Tradition}, 100.


Whereas the income gap between city and countryside was negligible in the 1920s and cities could not easily absorb farmers during the Great Depression, it was precisely the income gap of the 1960s, about which the farm lobby wrung its hands, which facilitated structural change. Indebtedness was a problem for farmers during the Weimar and Bonn years, but it was not a motivating factor in widespread radicalization of farmers in the latter as it was in the former.26 Although farmers enjoyed protectionism in both the Weimar and Bonn eras, important distinctions exist. Agriculture was more “introverted” in the earlier period, whereas after 1945 farmers were quite aware of the outside world. In Schleswig-Holstein, the farm lobby constantly envied neighboring Denmark and the Netherlands for examples of well-educated farmers and smooth cooperation between agriculture and food processing. The weekly Bauernblatt reported frequent excursions and exchange programs of youth groups, the women’s organization of the farm association, and research trips undertaken by farmers and agricultural scientists on a level that far surpassed anything previously. The globalization of agriculture received grudging acceptance.

The post-World War II era gave farmers’ in Schleswig-Holstein and the rest of West Germany a second chance at democracy, but the conditions were really quite different from the post-World War I era. Most obviously, there was tacit consent that the extreme rhetoric of the NPD led down a path “everyone” knew was wrong. The Cold War limited political options to the CDU. The dominance of the two-party system meant a vote for the NPD was in fact a vote for the SPD. The Christian Democrats were a “people’s party” with a remarkably similar voter and member profile as the NSDAP in Schleswig-Holstein, with farmers forming a solid pillar for

each party. The CDU enjoyed a forty-year tenure in *Land* politics, and, with few exceptions, farmers reliably voted for it.\(^{27}\)

Farmers’ faced broader political options during other brief moments. In the immediate postwar period, there were attempts to build up right-wing parties, such as the BHE (for refugees and expellees). However, the CDU moved quickly and marginalized or vacuumed up such splinter parties. The Christian Democrats were in power in Schleswig-Holstein for forty years after World War II, partially due to farmers’ loyalty.

An important aspect of democratization addressed in this study was local politics, notably “*Honoratiorenpolitik,*” the traditional way in which prominent farmers (along with doctors, lawyers, etc.) dominated communal politics by presiding over many institutions, such as church groups, the local fire brigade, and cooperatives.\(^{28}\) Analyzing the interplay of occupation (farming) and politics at the lower level reveals that the relationship was difficult. Local notables were seen as influential personalities first, and only secondarily as members of the CDU. There was a pronounced aversion to allowing party politics to intrude at the communal level.\(^{29}\) Ulrich Mathée’s 1967 study of Segeberg noted that the forces for continuity outweighed those for change when refugees moved into the area and tried to make local politics more transparent and less subject to favoritism and nepotism. Similarly, for Westphalia, Exner found that if Catholic villages became more of a “melting pot” following the influx of new settlers, then it was the

\(^{27}\) Farmers were the cornerstone (Stammwählerschaft) of the Christian Democrats in Italy as well; Corni, “Markt,” 75.

\(^{28}\) Multiple affiliations often provided more sources of income for local farmer-politicians, and long tenure led to aging of leadership.

\(^{29}\) Mathée, *Elitenbildung,* 60.
newcomers who did most of the “melting.” Those who refused to bow to pressure joined the SPD and so remained on the margins of rural politics. Rural communities remained closed for a remarkably long time.

I studied the political culture of Schleswig-Holstein’s agriculture from 1945 through the early 1970s, being mostly driven by the question of democratization. The narrative revealed that the first postwar decade was the most important in terms of creating democratic structures (i.e., self-government) and mentalities, whereas the question after the mid-1960s became integration in the EU. Political culture was important for shaping how the farm lobby perceived and reacted to the prospect of integration. The lobby had a mixed record for recruiting farmers’ support. Leaders were reluctant to accept structural change and wished to keep as many farmers in agriculture as possible. Conversely, the bewildering complexity of EU regulations made farmers ever more dependent on their lobby for advice and aid.

The most salient point in comparing farmers’ political culture both to the 1968 student movement and the 1920s rural unrest is political violence. Farmers and the lobby in Schleswig-Holstein made it perfectly clear that, in the 1960s, there could be no return to the bad old days of riots, bomb attacks, and young farmers joining the Brown Shirts, the NSDAP’s paramilitary wing. Instead, farmers used modern media tactics, mounting their tractors to blockade streets. The lobby had become a narrowly focused interest group, primarily intent on improving farmers’ economic standing. Agriculture in West Germany was increasingly diverse and specialized, but it no longer bore the stamp of landed elites of East Elbia. Unlike French and Belgian farmers in the

---

1960s, those in Schleswig-Holstein and most of West Germany were unwilling to use even
demonstrative violence to make their point or join with the student movement.

Key personalities in farm protest bear out these observations. Claus Heim was a
prominent farmer in the 1920s who supported the use of political violence to bring about the
downfall of the republic. He had no public offices or duties, thus enabling him to pursue the
politics of irresponsibility. However, Detlef Struve and Edmund Rehwinkel operated in a much
different environment. They were so interconnected with political parties, local and higher
government, and interest groups that it would have been political suicide to pursue radical
policies.

I opted for a qualitative rather than quantitative approach toward democratization and
political culture. Regarding political violence, quantitative analyses support my finding
insomuch that willingness to use violence to resolve problems rather than working through the
parliamentary system indicated a high correlation to voting for extreme parties (either the NPD
or KPD).³¹

Extolling the family farm was a common theme in Western Europe. The longevity of the
notion set West Germany apart. Perhaps it was due to Germany’s defeated status that many
searched for a harmless, or even better, a wholesome, identification. Was it a case of pouring old
wine into new bottles? The agrarian myth, which had played a negative role in German history,
proving itself quite amenable to National Socialism, for example, now came to stand for rooted,

---
³¹ Hans-Deiter Klingemann and Franz Pappi, *Politischer Radikalismus. Theoretische und methodische Probleme der
Radikalismusforschung, dargestellt am Beispiel einer Studie anläßlich der Landtagswahl 1970 in Hessen* (Munich,
1972), especially 61 and 108. The authors interviewed 700 young farmers in Hesse and derived criteria such as
attitudes toward civil rights, totalitarianism, National Socialist ideology, and authoritarian traditional beliefs.
traditional farm families who stabilized the political order.\textsuperscript{32} Previously, it stood for anti-modernism, anti-democracy, and even anti-Semitism.

The extent to which farmers were prepared to admit that they “learned their lesson” from the Weimar Republic and Third Reich is impossible to gauge. The high points of agrarian protest in Germany in the twentieth century took place exactly forty years apart, in 1928 and 1968. But, scanning the articles of the \textit{Bauernblatt} covering the latter date, one is at pains to find reference to the earlier one. The agricultural press was certainly anxious to publicize the farmers’ orderly and peaceful behavior. However, the historical memory to which they were willing to admit in public went back no further than 1945. Tilton only had anecdotal evidence that many farmers rejected the NPD because “we all know where that leads to.”\textsuperscript{33} Many farmers in the intervening decades retired or died, but the leadership (certainly in Schleswig-Holstein) was composed of many born around 1900, i.e., whose formative years were during the 1920s. So we must read more into the actions than words of consensus politicians such as Detlef Struve, who went to great lengths to prevent farmers’ radicalization or alienation from government and society. More outspoken politicians such as Edmund Rehwinkel, though advocating more forcible methods to improve the farmers’ lot during structural change, never seriously contemplated deserting the Federal Republic’s parliamentary democracy.

What I found most surprising was how powerful the farm lobby remained throughout the surveyed time period and the consistency of its rhetoric and methods of political mobilization. One would never guess from reading its publications that its clientele was shrinking precipitously from 1945 to 1973. Leaders such as Struve and Rehwinkel enjoyed the Chancellor’s confidence, and not only if he happened to be a Christian Democrat. Farmers were


\textsuperscript{33} Tilton, \textit{Nazism}, 141.
members of the Association in great numbers and our access to the history of structural change and evolving political culture is primarily through this lobby.

In terms of European integration, we might return to one of the most important histories of postwar agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein, Erich Thiesen’s *Es Begann im Grünen Kreml*. The book’s title is apposite for this discussion. Calling Rendsburg, the city where most of agriculture’s administration was housed, a “Green Kremlin” was originally a criticism of the increasing centralization of control. Leaders were losing touch with the heartland and becoming technocrats in a vast bureaucracy, answerable to politicians in Bonn and Brussels. Many farmers and their representatives feared that they would have less control over their livelihood in Schleswig-Holstein. However, there was a flip side: agro-politicians were aware of and exploited the strong dairy industry in Schleswig-Holstein to help “market” that *Land*, to raise consumers’ awareness of it, and drum up subsidies. Growing bureaucratization of agricultural management *could* just as easily mean that officials in Brussels would understand the strengths of regions in EU countries and design policy accordingly. As Patel has demonstrated, the cadre of agricultural ministers working in Brussels became a close-knit group over time that was not insensitive to the particularities of each country’s agriculture. I agree with Gerhard that as the Common Agricultural Policy unfolded, farmers in Schleswig-Holstein increasingly came to see their government as their staunchest ally in the face of European integration. Most farmers felt the same about the DBV: the lobby was crucial in helping farmers understand the intricacies of regulation and bureaucracy. This outside pressure was absent during the 1920s, or, rather, farmers, the lobby, and the government did their best to ignore it. Moreover, farmers back then believed the lobby and conservative political parties failed to represent farmers’ interests. Farmers’ rejection of the Weimar “system” led them to National Socialism.

---

Most European member states maintained their traditional price-centric policies, which CAP largely adopted. In this way, European integration initially was not a “brave new world” for West German farmers, who were now used to getting their way. Increasing sums went to support agriculture at taxpayers’ expense. Farm lobbyists in Schleswig-Holstein constantly complained about the “special disadvantages” their Land suffered, such as market distance. Seen in international context, these problems seem much smaller. For example, in 1967-68, the average Italian farmer had about half the capital of his German counterpart, one-third less than a Frenchman, and only one-eighth of a British farmer.

The “long farewell” to agriculture was exceptionally long in Germany. After all, pressure groups to ease agriculture’s confrontation with industrialization and the modern world emerged in the Wilhelmine era in Germany. In particular, East Elbian estate owners were culprits in the Sonderweg thesis. Of course, in the Federal Republic there were no more Junker, but how much did the leopard change his spots? The farm lobby was composed of many urbane, sophisticated men in suits, more adept at negotiating red tape than running a big farm. The rhetoric was shorn of Blut und Boden from the Third Reich and the chauvinist, anti-urban flavor of the Weimar and Imperial eras. However, the protection of agriculture from “unfair” world competition was a mainstay of German politics from Caprivi to Adenauer and beyond. If anything, farmers in Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony, and neighboring areas became more powerful in the Federal Republic. With no Junkern to compete with, the 1950s was the golden age of the mid-sized

35 Corni, “Markt,” 76.
36 Corni, “Markt,” 76.
37 Hans-Jürgen Puhle, Agrarische Interessenpolitik und preußischer Konservatismus im wilhelminischen Reich (Bonn, 1975).
38 For a long-ranging comparison, see Corni, “Markt,” 62-77.
livestock business (*mittelständische bäuerliche Veredelungswirtschaft*). The farm lobby emerged from the ground up in Germany after 1945, similarly to how it reconstituted itself after 1918. Whereas the agrarian interest groups were inimical to the democratic order in Weimar, they were an integral part of the system in the Bonn Republic. In Schleswig-Holstein farm interests formed early links to the Christian Democrats and were subsequently one of its pillars of support.

If the lobby was powerful out of all proportion to the people in agriculture and its contribution to the GDP, then the lobby in Schleswig-Holstein was quite powerful and successful in shaping structural change in the most beneficial way. For example, the Land was able to secure great funds to finance Program North, a massive infrastructure and agricultural improvement project. Other Länder, such as Bavaria, had more significant problems with structural change. Schleswig-Holstein had to absorb many refugees after WWII. Bavaria had to absorb 1.6 million. The hardship for farmers giving up their smaller plots in the south and west should not be underestimated. However, in places where the average farm size was much larger, such as Schleswig-Holstein, the lobby had the temerity to claim how difficult structural change was. The north was the hotbed of agricultural protest, not the south.

Paul Erker’s examination of the 1945-1953 period provides numerous insights on the region where National Socialism was born but where farmers at least initially were more

---

39 Corni, “Markt, Politik und Staat,” 73.


41 Exner, Eichmüller.

resistant to the National Socialist message than those in northern Schleswig-Holstein.\textsuperscript{43} He is most concerned with the social consequences of postwar hunger and the currency reform on the farmers and working-class. As producers, farmers were able to avoid immediate structural change, but once a new currency was introduced in 1948, they felt threatened by modernization and mechanization. However, Erker argues that in Bavaria, increasing food shortage strikes and voter turnouts did not lead to widespread animosity toward democracy. He sees a strong correlation between economic upswing and citizens’ acceptance of the liberal-democratic political order.

In a later article, Erker makes an important intervention in the historiography of postwar German agriculture by arguing that farmers did not simply react to change or consider themselves threatened by modernization, but actively contributed to it.\textsuperscript{44} Farmers’ changing lifestyles did not always entail abrupt uprooting from the countryside to the cities but often an intermediate stage of living in the countryside while commuting to work in cities and towns. Farmers provided a flexible labor force that could return to work in the countryside during economic contractions. I tested whether Paul Erker’s findings for Bavaria held for Schleswig-Holstein, namely that farmers were neither passive recipients of change nor “losers” in the process of modernization.\textsuperscript{45} I see the dichotomy between “winners and losers” of change as too simplistic.

\textsuperscript{43} Erker, \textit{Ernährungskrise und Nachkriegsgesellschaft}. A parallel study for Schleswig-Holstein is Stüber, \textit{Der Kampf}.

\textsuperscript{44} Erker, “Der lange Abschied vom Agrarland,” 327-60.

\textsuperscript{45} \textit{Ibid}, 331.
Epilogue: A Farm in Schleswig-Holstein in the early 1970s

Johannes Maschmann exclaimed in his memoir: “how much has farming changed since my childhood!”¹ As the subtitle of his memoirs state, his experience was valid for practically any farm in Schleswig-Holstein. His story allows us to take stock of some of the major changes in agriculture so that, by the early 1970s, the job and way of life of a farmer was quite different than I sketched out in the prologue.

Maschmann focused on how different the collection of hay and grain production was in the thirty year interim. Hay was used for fodder and animal bedding. In the 1940s it was a nearly all-day affair, with a horse-drawn wagon being piled up with hay, forked by each farmer. Of course, during the early morning, when the dew was still clinging to the grass, farmers would take their freshly sharpened scythes to cut the grass down. The most important aspect was that all parts of the process were done by hand.

By 1970 the process was completed in a matter of hours using machines. Indeed, few farmers even bothered collecting hay any more.² In the old days, every strand of hay counted, but now, since so many farmers used fertilizers, a few loose bundles did not matter. Those farmers who still collected hay brought it quickly to the silo for fermentation, spread dung over the

¹ Maschmann, Lebenserinnerungen, 182.
² Maschmann, Lebenserinnerungen, 186.
mowed area, and in a few weeks the area would be mown again. “Nowhere can you smell fresh hay anymore.”

As for grain, mechanization greatly shortened the time needed for the many steps. A company-owned thresher, for example, would rotate among neighboring farms to make short work of a previously laborious job. With all the advisors, technicians and farmers about, the only people with more work to do than in the old days were the women, who prepared the meals. The company which owned the equipment visited large farms first, leaving smaller ones (like Maschmann’s) for the end of the day. Although the work was tedious and slow, at least in the old days the farmer did not have to wait for outsiders – structural change often meant the pride that comes with independence went by the wayside. Maschmann also recalled how in the late 1960s the very landscape changed to accommodate the new, large, cumbersome machines. The small scattered plots with hedgerows (Knicks), a holdover from centuries before, had to be consolidated and evened out. This process of land reconsolidation (Flurbereinigung) began in 1953 and continued for decades, a collaborative effort between farmers and local agriculture offices. Maschmann himself participated in meetings and surveying expeditions. Indeed, it was not easy representing farmers’ interests collectively, since no one wanted an inferior piece of land.

Dairy farming also changed tremendously. Gone were the days of farmers milking by hand, occasionally taking a draft from the warm bucket to quench their thirst. Even better, if one saw neighbors milking too, small breaks (Klönsnack) were improvised for a chit-chat. By the late 1960s one farmer supervised the milking of 8 cows or more at a time using a machine. With herd

---

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid, 189.
sizes, on average, being much larger than twenty years before, there could be no thought for
socializing, much less taking a surreptitious gulp of milk (hygienic concerns!).

Farmers used to produce their own cheese and butter depending on local demand. They
would deliver milk in an irregular fashion, both in terms of amount and means of transport (cart,
by foot, bicycle). Now trucks came for regular delivery and set amounts of milk.

Overall Maschmannn thought life improved, the work was easier (Das Leben wurde
immer angenehmer), even allowing the farm couple to take vacations. Raiffeisen, responsible for
so much in agriculture (credit, education and advising, technical assistance) organized trips to
southern Germany. Johannes and his wife could afford better clothes, though Mrs. Maschmann
wore her new fur coat only on very special occasions. “We were always modest and contented
ourselves with few material things.”5 At least in Maschmann’s memory, structural change may
have entailed great economic, technological and even political transformations. Nevertheless,
certain values still held good.

---

5 Ibid, 195.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Unpublished Sources

Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik (ACDP), Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, St. Augustin 01-287 003/2, Pagel Nachlass.

ACDP 02-090 (Nachlass Andreas Hermes).

ACDP 03-006 088/2. Bauernverband Schleswig-Holstein e.V., Vorstandsprotokollen des Bauernverbandes Schleswig-Holstein e.V., Rendsburg.

Bundesarchiv Koblenz (BAK), B 116 Nr. 36278.

BAK, Bundeskanzleramt, B 136 Nr. 86, 661, 3549, 8637-38.


Kreisarchiv Stormarn S 100 Nr. 18, 58, 59, 60, 61, 63, 78, 79, 84, 93, 94, 115, 118, 153, 155, 156 (interview transcriptions)

Kreisarchiv Steinburg-Itzehoe, Erinnerungen Magdalene Gravert.


Landesarchiv Schleswig-Holstein (LAS), Abt. 320.13 (Plön)

LAS Abt. 605 Nr. 2330.

LAS Abt. 721 Nr. 2308, Nr. 7411.

Niedersächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Hannover V.V.P. 38 Nr. 346, Nachlass Rehwinkel.

Published Sources


*Bundesgesetzblatt* Nr. 10 (2 March 1951).


"Aktuelle fragen der Agrarpolitik im Rahmen der europäischen Integration," 
_Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Forschung des Landes Nordrheins-Westfalen_, Folder 140 
(Cologne, 1965).

Niklas, Wilhelm. _Sorgen um das täglichen Brot_. Bonn/Hamburg, April 1951.


Rurüp, Bernhard. Wirtschaftliche und gesellschaftliche Perspektiven der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Munich, 1989.


–. *Am Tage Danach.* Hamburg, 1946.


