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# PART I

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## ZWEI DEUTSCHE STAATEN

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It is not a simple matter to explain the meaning of the adjective 'German'. When applied to the language, the word 'German' refers to a wide range of language forms used in a variety of cultures, including those of Austria and Switzerland. When applied to a country or a people the use of the word 'German' becomes even more complicated. Historically, what we refer to in general terms as 'Germany' has been united for only a relatively short period, and parts of the area would have been better known, in earlier days, as the kingdoms of Prussia or Bavaria, Saxony or Hanover, the duchies of Saxe-Weimar or Baden, the principalities of Hohenzollern or Hesse-Homburg. The 'German' confederation of 1815 had 33 members, with the Austrian Empire acting as the dominant partner. Earlier still, between the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and the Napoleonic conquest a century and a half later, Germany was 'a mosaic of more than 1800 political entities ranging in size and influence from the 77 major secular principalities down to the 51 Imperial cities, 45 Imperial villages and 1475 territories ruled by Imperial knights' (E. J. Passant, *A Short History of Germany*).

The effects of a succession of wars and the policies of Bismarck and Hitler created a German nation, still strongly conscious of its regional variations but also with a sense of national purpose. But the policies which raised the German nation, firstly of Wilhelmine Germany and later of the Third Reich brought disrepute to the concept of German nationalism, and after 1945 a new phase of history brought into being two German states, each with its claim to individual German nationhood.

This division into two German states is the most significant factor in understanding the present nature of what we call 'German'. How did the post-war situation come into being? The text in Chapter 1 describes how, even before the signing of the ceasefire, the Ameri-



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cans on the one hand and the Russians on the other had already selected the man each wanted to lead their own version of the new Germany.