

PREFACE

The annual summit of the major industrialized powers has not been the subject of much detailed scholarly analysis during the thirteen year history of the institution. Particularly absent has been any study of the individual countries participating in the summit process.

This study endeavors to assess in some detail the participation of the Federal Republic of Germany in all of the economic summits since the first at Rambouillet, France in 1975. Nevertheless, it must be noted that this assessment is limited by the general unavailability of internal German government documents and the resulting extensive reliance on newspaper coverage of the summits and interviews with participants.

It is recognized that both of these are not always the most reliable sources. The newspapers in particular rely overwhelmingly on press briefings by the separate national press secretaries. There can be no doubt that they are interested in showing their delegation and leader in the best light possible. At times this has led to some exaggeration of the real events that had taken place behind closed doors. Every effort has been made to counter this by comparing a number of international press reports on the separate summits. Only those reports in the German media that were largely verified by other sources were ultimately included in the study.

Despite the care taken to gain the most accurate assessment possible, the reader should bear in mind the peculiar national biases inherent in the media. Nevertheless, this analysis still gives a very accurate reflection of those issues the Federal Republic was concentrating on. It also reveals how these issues were approached by the German delegations in the individual summits. This study does reveal the dominant pattern of Germany's participation in the Seven Power Summits over the past thirteen years and ultimately allows one to reach a number of predictions about the issues that Germany is likely to focus on in the forthcoming summit in Toronto.

Michael Pons

Trinity College

June 1, 1988