

Brandt's crony organizes against Schmidt and Wehner

The split between the Brandt wing and the Schmidt wing of West Germany's Social Democratic Party was never more apparent than during the high-level U.S. tour by a Brandt ally, Social Democratic parliamentarian Conrad Ahlers, over the past two weeks. Openly counterorganizing against the war-avoidance policies of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and his ally parliamentary leader Herbert Wehner, Ahlers promoted the strengthening of NATO and a confrontation with the Soviet Union in eastern Europe in public forums, and meetings with U.S. military circles and National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski. And he sought to downplay the significance of the European Monetary System, which Schmidt helped found.

Ahlers has a long history of confrontationist politics. After his World War II German Army service as a paratrooper, Ahlers began to profile himself as a Social Democratic military expert known for his anti-Communist views. His membership in the anti-Communist right wing did not prevent him, however, from getting a journalist's job with the liberal weekly *Der Spiegel* in the late 1950s, where he became that magazine's military affairs expert.

In 1962 Ahlers started the watering of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer with a famous article in *Der Spiegel* alleging that the West German Bundeswehr was only "provisionally ready" to defend the country. The toppling of Adenauer was British policy, directed at Adenauer's alliance with French President de Gaulle. Several years later, it was revealed that Ahlers and *Der Spiegel* had gotten the information for the article from the BND, the British-controlled West German intelligence agency.

When Willy Brandt became West German Foreign Minister in the Social-Democratic-Christian Democratic "grand coalition" in 1967, Ahlers was rewarded for his journalistic achievements with the position of government spokesman. Since member of parliament, and a leading member of the parliamentary defense commission.

The following are statements Ahlers made at the American University School of International Affairs in Washington, D.C., April 10, and at the Harvard

University Center of European Affairs, April 12. Ahlers was questioned by members of the U.S. Labor Party, whose chairman Lyndon LaRouche was an architect of the European Monetary System policy adopted by Schmidt. In the exchanges, reference is made to reports that the Brandt wing is seeking to ban communication between members of the SPD and members of the European Labor Party, the USLP's cothinker organization in Europe.

Ahlers reinterprets German policy

American University, April 10:

Ahlers: I am traveling here to mend a major misunderstanding that has arisen between the German people and the American people. ... There are fears that seem to be coming from U.S. leaders about a basic reorientation in BRD policy, that as the Cold War slackens, the BRD would leave the Alliance. Some people would even compare this to Rapallo. I want to assure you that this is not the case. Detente does have a special meaning for Germany, but there is no such idea as leaving NATO and joining the Warsaw Pact. ...

Germans have become aware that the geographic scope of NATO is too limited. Things that affect our security happen outside of NATO... such as in the Mideast and Africa....

There is general concern and gratitude in West Germany to the U.S. for the increase in defense budgets for NATO. ... We support it. ... We are concerned about the continuing buildup of Warsaw Pact forces, and some of us fear that what the Soviet Union is striving for is regional hegemony such as in Yugoslavia after Tito's death or something that can be used in the Mideast.

USLP: You are the Ahlers who wrote the *Der Spiegel* ar-

... ticle that was the basis for overthrowing the Adenauer government?

Ahlers: Yes.

USLP: *Since you are an expert in the causes that bring down governments, would you comment on the article in the London press and the New York Times implying a change of government in Germany ... these articles seem to be attacking Chancellor Schmidt. Could you also comment on the Franco-German alliance and the European Monetary System (EMS)?*

Ahlers: In terms of governments changing, there's Thatcher, but I have my own bets on Thatcher, that she will not get in. But Helmut Schmidt will stay. He has massive popularity ... the economy is in good shape, and the opposition is incoherent....

As for the Franco-German alliance. Franco-German relations are extremely good, they are so good that it even frightens other political leaders to see such a close relationship. ... Everyone knows that it was Giscard and Schmidt, using their close relationship, that put together the EMS.

The goal of the EMS is to promote the unity of Europe. Unfortunately, I do not think it will work.

USLP: *You mentioned that the geographic scope of NATO is too limited. Are you advocating an expansion of NATO?*

Ahlers: Most certainly not. Politically and militarily it is not advantageous. But we find ourselves in a position where the security guaranteed by the treaty alliance is insufficient. Of course, Spain could join NATO quite easily, but this would not be a geographic extension of NATO.

USLP: *I am a member of the U.S. Labor Party. From what you just said, it is obvious that you are intervening against the influence of the Labor Party and Helmut Schmidt and Herbert Wehner. Didn't Willy Brandt say that the European and U.S. Labor Party had to be prevented from getting the power the Mexican Labor Party has in Mexico?*

Ahlers: This is simply absolutely not correct.

Harvard University, April 12:

Ahlers: ...well, there have been certain areas of friction between the BRD and the United States. ... I have traveled throughout America, visiting places like Kansas City and Minneapolis ... and found that people were asking a good deal about self-Finlandization, Rapallo ... I must say that there is something to self-Finlandization.

When asked about Herbert Wehner, SPD parliamentary leader: You have to understand that Wehner is an

Ahlers's itinerary: official and unofficial

Konrad Ahlers' itinerary in the United States was difficult to obtain. According to a Mr. Buhrstette of the West German Embassy in Washington, Ahlers visited:

April 4-5:

U.S. Army Association, Greater Atlanta Chapter
Atlanta Hungry Club
Southern Center for International Studies, Atlanta,
Atlanta Constitution (newspaper)
Atlanta Journal (newspaper)

April 7-10:

Center for Strategic and International Studies,
Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.
School of International Affairs,
American University, Washington, D.C.
U.S. Pentagon offices
U.S. Congressional offices
U.S. State Department offices

Foreign Service Inter-Parliamentary Seminar

April 11-13:

Center for European Studies,
Harvard University,
Cambridge, Mass.
Lehman Institute, New York, N.Y.
Hudson Institute, New York, N.Y.

However, *Executive Intelligence Review* has learned that Mr. Ahlers made unscheduled trips to both Kansas City and Minneapolis, had private meetings on the U.S. Army base at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and a private audience with U.S. National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski. Inasmuch as the West Germany Embassy appeared to be unaware of these activities, it is not known whether the West German government approved them or not.

old man. And when you get older you tend to get pessimistic. He is pessimistic and adamantly opposed to deploying those nuclear weapons on German soil because he's afraid that the Soviets will regard this as a provocation. ...

...there is a growing conflict between the issues of defense and of detente. I myself am coming down more on the side of defense because all the emphasis in the present has been on detente, and to balance this defense must catch up. Suppose Tito dies. It is probable that the Soviets might make a military move to annex Yugoslavia to the Warsaw Pact. And their judgment on whether this will succeed or not depends on the balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact...

After Salt II and III, if you have a strict parity between the Soviet Union's and the United States' ICBMs ... then Western Europe is at a permanent disadvantage because the Soviet Union can hit Europe with intermediate range missiles. The West doesn't have that....

Many studies show, and the fact that they all come up with the same numbers shows they cannot be in error, that the Soviets have deployed 180,000 more troops than the Soviets admit to. And we know where they are, they are in Poland.

USLP: *You mentioned at the outset that there is increasing conflict between defense and detente ... but then there was the Bonn-Moscow pact. ... It seems to me that there is some force, in the BRD as well as in the SPD, that wants to push back this policy by Helmut Schmidt and bring BRD policy in line with London and Washington's idea of NATO. The London Economist said there was an effort underway to reorient the West German policy around this. ...*

Ahlers: Well, first of all, when Willy Brandt was in Moscow he signed a treaty that was almost identical. A treaty is only as good as what will work. The problem is it hasn't worked. One problem is that the Soviets have no capacity to deliver. Their infrastructure, their economy, can't handle this. It is not Rapallo. Rapallo is always a rightist policy and it means a break with the West.

West German industrialists would rather not deal with the Soviets. They'd rather deal with other countries. What we have with the Soviet Union is really very small and I see no significant increase.

All of these questions are under reexamination now. And as I said, the emphasis is placed on strengthening defense. ... Of course, I'd prefer to deal with Brezhnev,

because we know with whom we are dealing ... and detente has worked out very positively between East and West Germany, because Germany is the only country with its people on both sides. There would be more destabilization if East Germany were isolated. It's fine for them, but with the Soviets you do not get too much.

USLP: *I'd like to introduce myself. I'm Graham Lowry from the U.S. Labor Party. I think that the drift of your remarks confirms what we have gotten from an SPD executive committee member. If this is what you are doing, then you are trying to limit the influence of the EAP and the USLP and you are aiding the push for war.*

Ahlers: It's the Labor Party!—Don't overdramatize the situation. Of course there is something to what you say about discussion within the SPD executive committee. But this is not my interest or my concern.

USLP: *Do you know of PRM-32, the presidential memo that said that one third of your country will be destroyed and abandoned by NATO forces. ...*

Ahlers: Yes.

USLP: *And you told us of meeting with Brzezinski. You know what he told you?*

Yes.: USLP

USLP: *And you told us of meeting with Brzezinski. You know what he told you?*

Ahlers: Yes.

USLP: *And you have heard of the Federal Emergency Management Agency?*

Ahlers: Yes.

USLP: *It sounds to me like something that happened in Germany in the early 1930's.*

Ahlers: No, no it is not analogous. Besides, I was too little then.

USLP: *You are engaging in efforts to contain the USLP and the EAP, and so you are engaging in efforts for nuclear war. Tell that to Willy Brandt.*

Ahlers: I don't see him that often, I saw him in March.

USLP: *Well, tell him that this is a hell of a time to pull the high treason act.*

Ahlers: What do you mean by treason?