

Kohl government's wavering leads to setbacks in the state elections

by Rainer Apel

Radio Moscow, in its first commentary on the Sept. 25 election results in the West German states of Hesse and Bremen, hailed them as "a vote of the people against NATO rearmament and for the party which opposes the stationing of the American missiles, the Social Democratic Party," a sentiment echoed by the official Swiss daily, *Neue Züricher Zeitung*. Leaving aside the issue of what "the people" of the Federal Republic of Germany really think, the unexpectedly poor showing by Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democratic Union—a 6.5 percent vote loss in Hesse and 0.5 percent loss in Bremen—testifies to the failure of political institutions in the country to formulate a foreign policy in the national interest, a policy which could prevent a "hot autumn" of Weimar-style destabilization and chaos.

The Christian Democrats are teetering between propitiation of the Americans one day and of the Russians the next. The Social Democratic Party (SPD) has dissolved itself into the Soviet-backed "peace movement," as high-level party officials call publicly for the ouster of American influence from Europe. The Catholic Church is enmeshed in intrigues with the Russian Orthodox Church, aimed at creating a *Mitteleuropa* buffer zone between the two superpowers. The Protestant Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) is the principal "back channel" to the East and the brains behind the peace movement.

In both Hesse and Bremen, the Social Democratic Party gained 3 percent, capitalizing on popular anger at the Kohl government's austerity policies. As *EIR* predicted when Kohl was elected chancellor March 6, his "Brüning-style" budget cuts have made him one of the most unpopular politicians in Germany, and the vote showed it. Kohl acknowledged this in a television statement as the election returns came in, but vowed that the austerity would continue: "the CDU is in a difficult situation because of this government's rationalization policy, which has hit 30 million voters. . . . But in spite of this we will continue our austerity policy because it is the right policy."

In foreign policy, Kohl's precarious balancing act between Germany's principal occupying powers has led him to reaffirm his loyalty to the NATO alliance, while keeping his Eastern options open by playing footsie with Andropov under the table. In a radio interview Sept. 17, the chancellor as-

serted unequivocally that his government would not break its promise to deploy U.S. Pershing and cruise missiles if Geneva arms talks fail, since to do so "would plant the seed for the destruction of NATO. . . . When NATO does not hold its shield and umbrella over us, this would naturally also be the beginning of the neutralization of West Germany."

Yet just days later Kohl gave his consent for a Sept. 21 meeting between the head of the chancellor's office, Cabinet Minister Jenninger, and top members of the notorious Communist Party-dominated Krefeld Initiative. The group was one of the organizers of a mass anti-American demonstration against U.S. Vice-President George Bush in May, during which his motorcade was violently attacked by extremists. It was only a last-minute intervention from conservative Christian Democrats around Bavarian Minister President Franz-Josef Strauss that forced Kohl to cancel that strange encounter. But other, sometimes clandestine, contacts are being cultivated between the CDU and the "peace movement," including the formation this month of a new group called "60 Christian Democrats Against Rearmament."

SPD demands unilateral disarmament

The Social Democratic Party, since Kohl's election last spring, has come under full leftist domination. Egon Bahr, the party's disarmament strategist, recently blamed the United States for holding up progress at the Geneva talks by rejecting Andropov's proposal for a nuclear test-ban. "If Andropov's proposals were realized, the world would become a bit more secure," he said. Bahr is a member of the Palme Commission on Disarmament, which advocates the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Europe and a one-year postponement of the stationing of the Euromissiles.

Party chairman and former chancellor Willy Brandt, who at one time would have given plenty of lip-service to the defense of the NATO alliance, now speaks of "the vision of a future European peace order under which the successor [postwar] generation is no longer the victim of the situation between the two blocs . . . a Europe with the Russians out and the others, too."

At a series of regional SPD conferences in September, six party organizations voted up resolutions against the Eu-

romissiles. The most radical one was passed by the SPD of the north German state of Schleswig-Holstein, which called for unilateral disarmament measures by the West and a nuclear-free Europe. Delegates called for SPD support for anti-missile protests in October, including for "symbolic civil disobedience."

The keynote address delivered by the chairman of that SPD district, Guenther Jansen, termed Andropov's proposal for balancing Soviet against British and French nuclear missiles "favorable to Europe's interests." He said that the SPD's aim was to weaken the existing military blocs and have both the Soviet and American troops move out of Europe. "It was an American administration which, against all human reason, deployed atomic bombs against human beings in Japan," he demagogically cried.

It takes plenty of *chutzpah* for a left-wing Social Democrat like Jansen to talk about "human reason," when the political climate created by his party around the missile issue is fostering mass irrationality and jacobinism. Security officials in the Federal Republic are continuing to warn of Soviet-sponsored violence during the coming fall demonstrations, and particularly of the threat to U.S. Army bases.

The "Revolutionary Cells" on Sept. 20 bombed a computer-center of the MAN company in Gustavburg (near Frankfurt) in what they termed "a punitive exemplary action against a company working for rearmament." The "Autonomous Groups" are planning violent blockades of U.S. Army transportation routes such as the vital port of Nordenham. Their stated aim is "to disrupt the daily functioning of a central military control point for a short period of time." The Nordenham "Autonomous Groups" outline their sabotage plans: "Resistance against the military infrastructure creates a chance for spoiling war plans efficiently."

A leaflet distributed by "anti-imperialistic and anti-militaristic groups" in the Nordenham region says that "with guerrilla actions and with continuous militant resistance we have the chance of preparing the break—against the Federal German state, against the U.S.-NATO military strategy." Could these marching orders be taken out of a manual for Warsaw Pact sabotage squads to be deployed against NATO in case of war?

West German Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmerman, in a speech in Cologne Sept. 22, warned that "the threat of terrorism is far from over." Zimmerman repeated the charges of German security chief Heribert Hellenbroich, who created a furor during the summer by announcing that the peace movement gets money from Eastern intelligence services. Hellenbroich's statements were blacked out of the news media, and the secret government report proving his charges was suppressed, reportedly on orders from the U.S. Embassy and the German Foreign Ministry.

Entering the fray for the first time, Zimmerman denounced "the campaign against the NATO counterarmament that is being orchestrated by the Moscow-oriented communists." The Communist Party of Germany (DKP) is a "Trojan horse of Soviet long-term strategy," he said, and its growing

role in organizing demonstrations against the NATO missile deployment is "a threat to the stability of our democracy."

The role of the EKD

The Evangelical Church of Germany (EKD) plays a special role in this destabilization of the country, through its extensive role in the peace movement and its influence in the political parties. The EKD has maintained close working relations with the Lutheran Church in East Germany, even during the worst years of the Cold War when hardly any other channels of communication existed. The churches today coordinate their activities so closely that they are for all intents and purposes one church, and one transmission belt for Soviet disinformation into the West.

The influence of the EKD on West Germany's domestic political scene is immense, and undoubtedly helped determine the outcome of the Hesse and Bremen elections. Its think tank, the Evangelical Student Associations' Research Center (FEST) in Heidelberg, provides the SPD's Egon Bahr with his ammunition against the United States and NATO. The Church also has leverage in the Christian Democratic Union via that party's Protestant wing. Georgetown University's Norman Birnbaum, a leftist friend of Egon Bahr, recently said that "if Chancellor Kohl tried to move against the peace movement, the EKD would show him his limits. The CDU would be able to feel the power of the EKD already in the next elections—the Church could draw voters away from Kohl."

Birnbaum invited one of the EKD's principal military strategists, Klaus von Schubert, to the United States for a series of discussions with American critics of the Reagan administration. Von Schubert headed the FEST's "working group on disarmament" and serves as a personal advisor to Egon Bahr. Another of the EKD's main string-pullers is south German nobleman and peace movement *éminence grise* Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker. He recently met U.S. arms negotiator Paul Nitze "for a lengthy discussion about nuclear disarmament," and sources inside the EKD say that "this might have some dampening effect on the Reagan administration, since Nitze has some maneuvering room and influence in Washington."

Richard von Weizsäcker, brother of Carl Friedrich and the Christian Democratic Mayor of West Berlin, is a member of the EKD Board who is also playing a key role in East-West negotiations, making use of the extensive networks of SPD contacts with East Germany organized by the leader of the Berlin SPD's left wing, Harry Ristock. Ristock is said to have reported regularly to von Weizsäcker on his numerous trips to East Germany since at least the end of 1981. Von Weizsäcker met at the end of September with East German party chief Erich Honecker and attended the Martin Luther 500th anniversary celebrations in Wittenberg, East Germany. In his speech there von Weizsäcker stressed that "in spite of the partition of our nation, we must always be aware that we belong to a special community of Evangelical Christians in East and West Germany."